

DOCTORAL THESIS

Women Counselling Psychology Trainees' Accounts of Clinical Supervision: An Exploration of Discursive Power

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**Women Counselling Psychology Trainees' Accounts of Clinical Supervision: An
Exploration of Discursive Power**

By

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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Department of Psychology

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Abstract

This research has drawn on poststructuralist thinking to posit that assertions of supervision being a benign and necessary process or activity rely on modernist assumptions. Utilising Foucault's work on discourses and power, this study conceptualised supervision as a social construction that has implications for practice and subjectivity, and that this process, within the context of counselling psychology, with its particular epistemological underpinnings, is worthy of further exploration. This study makes an original contribution through extending the work by Crocket (2004, 2007), who has investigated supervision's shaping effects on professional identity, to apply it to the particular epistemological and theoretical context of counselling psychology, a profession said to value postmodern ideas such as pluralism and ambiguity (Rizq, 2006). Semi-structured interviews with six women counselling psychology trainees were analysed using Foucauldian discourse analysis, a social constructionist methodology, and found a number of discourses implicated in trainees' subjectivity and practice. Whilst expert, developmental and gender discourses were found to be implicated in constructions of supervision as hierarchical, which was seen as a key aspect of constructions of power in supervision, other discourses were identified that offered positions from which to resist this. The researcher acknowledges that the discursive resources identified are based on this particular sample, could have been read in other ways and does not assume they can be applied to all trainee counselling psychologists. Rather, it is hoped this study may contribute to debate around supervision and its shaping effects and consequently be useful in enhancing counselling psychology's reflexivity in research and practice.

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INTRODUCTION:

The aim of the current study was to examine the institutional practice of clinical supervision critically, within the context of counselling psychology, and in particular the power relations at work. Specifically, the study explored what ways of being are permitted for women in counselling psychology training by the discourses available surrounding clinical supervision. Some research has explored power in supervision within psychotherapy and counselling generally but not in the counselling psychology context. It is the intention of this study to examine power relations in clinical supervision from a poststructuralist perspective. Such an approach has been undertaken for other professional contexts such as systemic and family therapy but not for counselling psychology. Poststructuralism is an aspect of counselling psychology's philosophical underpinnings and is therefore appropriate to be utilised in exploring this topic of power in clinical supervision. It may be said then that this research locates itself within social constructionism, which places as central the realisation that such research undertakings are only one of many other (possible) constructions and compels one to be fully self-reflexive about the research process and the supervisory relationship. This tension is succinctly surmised by Burr (2003, p.94):

“...if we understand knowledge, [sic] and truth as human constructions, we have even more responsibility to think, argue and make up our minds about our own views and then defend them”. (Burr, 2003, p.94)

This passage articulates the challenges of exploring women counselling psychology trainees' accounts of power in clinical supervision from a social constructionist

perspective, which can be both liberating and burdensome. It is liberating because it means that any attempt to write this research the 'right' or 'correct' way is baseless when we assume that there is no universal truth. It is burdening because it shows that my own construction is only one way of researching this question - it offers only one meaning in a plurality of others - and in its production it runs the risk of sidelining others. Given the fundamental concession to reflexivity required in social constructionist research, I will begin with myself, the researcher who is, at the same time, a counselling psychology trainee.

My interest in and choice of topic was based to some extent on my experience as a trainee studying on a counselling psychology doctorate course. This experience has been characterised at times by confusion and conflicting feelings when attempting to balance the demands of the research component of the course with focusing on clinical practice. This balancing act drew me to think about what counselling psychology is supposed to be, at least according to the university, an institution, at which I am enrolled. This juggling of what could feel like quite disparate endeavours, along with the challenging requirement to undertake personal therapy, could be at times an overwhelming, anxiety provoking experience. More specifically, I experienced this process as quite a disempowering, controlling one. One manifestation took place in one of my first clinical supervisory relationships, where it appeared to me that the supervisor assumed authority about what was the correct interpretation of the client material I had brought. Any disagreement by me of his interpretations, based on my experience of being with the client, was dismissed through re-framing them as my own neuroses or shadow coming into play. On one or two occasions I explicitly rebelled against this (what I perceived as) power over me,

but was wary of the fact that ultimately I would need this same supervisor to give feedback to my university about the quality of my clinical work in order for me to satisfy course requirements, thus, leaving me feeling disempowered to assert myself. Relatedly, I felt my position further weakened by occupying the social category of ‘trainee’, a culturally defined subordinate position. These reflections on my own experience as a trainee appear to be echoed somewhat in the literature regarding this area. For example, Truett (2001) reports that for those entering the profession of counselling the experience of training can be at times stressful or negative, and has been shown to sometimes be anxiety provoking (Kumary & Baker, 2008). Rizq (2006) suggests that in the case of counselling psychology a difficulty often faced by trainees is managing the ambiguity stemming from its pluralistic, postmodern underpinnings, where no single model to practice and research is endorsed. It is not being suggested that the process of training for the counselling profession generally, and counselling psychology in particular, being difficult is a good or bad thing necessarily, but that it warrants further research regarding it. There may be different strands or elements of such difficulty, but the focus for the current study will be on the issue of power for women trainees and specifically in the context of counselling psychology clinical supervision.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Literature Search:

An important initial step was to outline any previous interest in the topic within the research literature. Undertaking a literature search using psycARTICLES, and entering the terms ‘counselling psychology’ and ‘supervision’ revealed 32 results for relevant articles. Altering search terms to U.S spelling (i.e. counseling psychology)

showed up 115 results. Adding the term 'power' to this search resulted in only 2 and 3 articles using U.K and U.S spelling respectively. In comparison, pairing 'supervision' with 'psychotherapy', 'therapy' and 'counselling' resulted in 899, 1229 and 375 results respectively. Although these figures decreased when selecting full texts only (i.e accessible) during searches, they were still significantly higher than for counselling psychology. This variation would seem to indicate that supervision has been under researched in the counselling psychology literature, pointing to the importance of the current study. Furthermore, it would seem explorations of notions of power in supervision across all the disciplines mentioned have been largely neglected, with searches pairing 'supervision' and 'power' with 'psychotherapy', 'therapy' and 'counselling' yielding only 16, 25 and 25 results respectively.

Supervision:

Despite the fact that clinical supervision historically has been largely under-researched, there is now an increasing amount of research in the talking therapies field investigating clinical supervision (hereafter referred to as supervision) from the perspective of both supervisor and supervisee. Areas such as the supervisory relationship (Burke, Goodyear & Guzzard, 1998), supervisor style (Steward, Breland & Neil, 2001), supervision satisfaction (Ladany, Ellis, & Firedlander, 1999), good supervisee behaviour (Vespia, Heckman-Stone & Delworth, 2002), negative supervisory events (Ramos-Sanchez, Ensil, Goodwin, Riggs, Touster, Wright, Ratanasiripong, & Rodolfa 2002; Gray, Ladany, Walker & Ancis, 2001) and disclosure within supervision (Ladany, Corbett, & Nutt, 1996; Walsh, Gillespie, Greer, & Eanes, 2003; Webb & Wheeler, 1998; Yourman, 2003) have all been explored.

Such growing research interest in this area may have stemmed from observations that the preparation for those undertaking the role of supervisor has traditionally been unsystematic and nonspecific (Salvendy, 1993; Bradley, 1989). In particular, supervisors' level of experience as counsellors, rather than their possession of supervision specific qualities, has been the primary justification for entry into the role. Consequently supervisors have often based their practice on their own experiences as a supervisee rather than on any theoretical guidance (Proctor, 1994; Bradley, 1989; Holloway & Hosford, 1983 cited in Holloway & Wolleat, 1994). Similarly, Vespia, Heckman-Stone and Delworth (2002) point to a lack of role preparation for supervisees, which they address through their study of characteristics of trainees who use supervision well. Much of the research also stems from the argued importance of supervision in the process of developing clinical competence (Barnet, Erickson Cornish, Goodyear & Lichtenberg, 2007).

Supervision is argued to be “a fundamental ingredient of effective counselling and is essential for the welfare of the counsellor and his/her clients” (Fortune & Watts, 2000, p.5) and is seemingly the preferred method used for the assurance of quality and ethical practice in the profession (Proctor, 1994) in the current status quo. Indeed, the increasing professionalisation of counselling and psychotherapy, via regulatory bodies such as the BPS, BACP, and more recently, HPC in the case of counselling psychology has meant that not only counsellors in training but also qualified counsellors are encouraged, and in some cases required, to receive supervision whilst practicing (Fortune & Watts, 2000; Proctor, 1994; Taylor, 1994). But what exactly is supervision and why is its perceived usefulness taken for granted?

Holloway (1995, p.1) describes supervision as providing “the opportunity for a [supervisee] to capture the essence of the psychotherapeutic process as articulated and modelled by the supervisor and subsequently, to recreate this process in an actual counselling relationship”. Gilbert and Evans (2000, p.1) state that supervision is “a learning process in which a psychotherapist engages with a more experienced practitioner in order to enhance his skills in the process of ongoing professional development. This, in turn, promotes and safeguards the welfare of his clients”. Such definitions are based on various models of supervision, such as the process model of Hawkins and Shohet (1989; cited in Dryden & Thorne, 1991), and the developmental model formulated by Stoltenberg and Delworth (1987). Developmental models are based on the view that “supervisory skills need to be adapted to suit the stage of professional development reached by the supervisee” (Woolfe & Tholstrup, 2009, p.593), with stages being defined in terms of the level of competence of the supervisee. Furthermore, some theorists have outlined key functions of supervision, with Carroll (1996) for example listing the functions as educative, supportive, and administrative, which are in line with Proctor’s (1986; cited in Fortune & Watts, 2000) formative, restorative and normative functions. Particularly popular in the UK is the process model which conceptualises supervision as foci located either in client-therapist or supervisor-therapist matrices (Woolfe & Tholstrup, 2009). Hess (2011) has outlined that whilst supervision as a recognised speciality has a relatively short history, its past extends across all major therapeutic approaches and from their very beginnings. For example, Freud felt that analysts should be analysed as part of their training (Hess, 2011).

These definitions would appear to assume supervision to be inherently benign and necessary. However, this is debateable, as Davy (2002) for example, points out that there is little evidence that supervision actually changes therapist behaviour to produce positive effects on clinical outcomes for clients, or that it protects clients from abuse. Gridley (2004) asserts the function of gatekeeping and client protection ascribed to supervision is problematic, due to its “paternalistic and paradoxical assumptions that [clients] require protection via processes that remain beyond their awareness, consent, or control” (p.188-189). Relatedly, Woolfe and Tholstrup (2009) posit that it could be argued supervision functions as much to give legitimacy to the therapy profession as to provide quality control or anything else. Moreover, Feltham (cited in Bates & House, 2003, p.59) states that supervision is “...at least partly a form of surveillance and is associated with professional bureaucracy”. What can also be observed in these definitions and models is an implied degree of hierarchy and inequality between supervisor and supervisee and indeed the client, with the supervisor positioned as the ‘expert’, which suggests a dynamic of power in supervision. These alternative views, which problematise the presumed beneficence of supervision, along with the observation of power operating within it, would suggest that placing supervision under closer scrutiny may be a valuable task. Indeed, it is suggested by some that the helping professions must engage in some form of critical reflection on themselves. House (2011, p.39) for example states, “in order to avoid the imposing of an experiential and subjectivity-limiting straightjacket of profession-centred therapeutic orthodoxy, therapy at its best should be ongoingly and processually deconstructive of its own taken-for-granted professional ideologies and clinical practices”. Such critical reflexivity in research and practice is argued to be an aspect of counselling psychology in particular (McAteer, 2010). In line with this, it is

the intention of this study to deconstruct supervision, exploring the power relations within it, to question it as a taken-for-granted practice, opening up possibilities both within and beyond it.

Supervision & Power - Some previous research:

A number of studies exploring the process of supervision have indirectly investigated the concept of power. Burke, Goodyear and Guzzard (1998) for example, in examining fluctuations in the quality and strength of the supervisory working alliance process across time for ten supervisor-trainee dyads, found that weakenings in some of the dyad alliances studied were contributed to by the perceived power of the supervisor in the role of evaluator. The inherent power of the supervisor role due to its evaluative component (Muratori, 2001) has been argued to be a key difference between the therapeutic working alliance and the supervisory working alliance. Holloway and Wolleat (1994) posit that an inequality of power exists in the roles of supervision, given that supervision is a hierarchical relationship in which the supervisor's tasks include imparting expert knowledge, judging trainees' performance and essentially acting as a gatekeeper to the profession through their sanctioned ability to fail the supervisee via reports and stopping contact with clients. A study by Ladany, Corbett and Nutt (1996) investigating the occurrence of non-disclosures by supervisees found that the majority of supervisees withhold information from their supervisors and that when the content of the nondisclosure includes negative reactions to the supervisor, the reasons tend to be deference to the supervisor, impression management and fear of political suicide. The authors view these reasons as an extreme version of impression management that also includes a self-protective element in terms of the supervisee's professional existence (Ladany, et.al, 1996).

They suggest deference, reflecting the supervisee's deferral of power and control to the supervisor (Rennie, 1994, cited in Ladany et al, 1996), could indicate the supervisee's heightened awareness of the power differential in the supervision relationship. Webb and Wheeler (1998) similarly found supervisees were more able to disclose if they were being supervised independently of work settings, were not trainees being evaluated as part of their training, or were able to choose their own supervisors. All of these quantitative studies appear to refer to a dynamic of power in supervision.

Other studies have explored power in supervision more directly. For example, Rahim and Buntzman (1989), drawing on French and Raven's (1959; cited in Rahim & Buntzman, p.196) classification of power into five types, namely reward, coercive, legitimate, expert and referent, investigated the relationship between supervisory power bases and satisfaction with supervision and found that the referent power base, which is derived from interpersonal attraction, was positively correlated with satisfaction with supervision. Murphy and Wright (2005) attempted to examine supervisees' perspectives of power use in supervision in an in-depth way using the qualitative method of Grounded Theory. They pointed out that the use of power in supervision could have ostensibly positive uses such as 'empowerment' and 'collaboration', but could also be misused and abused, citing boundary violations such as providing unwanted therapy to a supervisee, forcing a supervisee to disclose and sexual harassment (Bonosky, 1995; cited in Murphy & Wright, 2005), as well as assigning an excessive caseload to a supervisee without appropriate supervision and forcing the supervisee to follow their supervisor's theoretical framework (Porter & Vasquez, 1997; cited in Murphy & Wright, 2005). Murphy and Wright (2005) found

an expectation among supervisees for their supervisors to have and to use power, and that supervisees experienced such power as contributing to their clinical development, even when experienced as uncomfortable to them, if used appropriately (Murphy & Wright, 2005). The above studies have shown power in supervision to be ostensibly negative and oppressive, in terms of limiting supervisee self-disclosure and weakening the supervisory alliance. However, Murphy and Wright's (2005) study showed that the power relation in supervision may be a more ambivalent, complex one in which it may also be positive or productive. This apparent complexity warrants some discussion of philosophical issues regarding power.

Power - Philosophical considerations:

Although existing research outlined above has touched on some of the parameters/indicators of what may be considered to be power, defining what power is and how it operates is not easily achieved, and whether this is even a worthwhile task is arguable for some. Indeed, it has been argued, based on Bateson's suggestion that power is a dangerous myth, that "power is...a linguistic distinction which refers to nothing in itself, and talk of which produces more problems in relationships than it solves" (Guilfoyle, 2002, p.83). However, others have placed great importance on power and its effects in the therapeutic context. Masson (1988), for example, goes so far as to argue that psychotherapy contains an imbalance of power that makes it intrinsically abusive and that psychotherapy should therefore be abandoned altogether. Similarly radical critiques and explorations of power in psychotherapy have been undertaken (e.g. Szasz, 1988).

In her exploration of power in relation to counselling and psychotherapy, Proctor (2002) makes a distinction between structuralist and post-structuralist theories of power. Structuralist theories tend to view power “as a possession, and as monolithic and unitary (held in one place and having one form) and unidirectional (held by one group of people)...[and] necessarily conceived of as negative and oppressive” (Proctor, 2002, p.27). Such perspectives are often criticised for leading to structural determinism where people are either oppressing or oppressed by virtue simply due to their position in one group or the other, with no sense of agency. Post-structural theories of power challenge the assumptions of structuralism, broadening power to be “something that is present in the relationship rather than being the possession of one person; as bidirectional and influenced by outside relationships; as inescapable, and as potentially both negative and positive” (Proctor, 2002, p.136).

Understanding Proctor’s (2002) distinction requires some outline of the philosophical positions of Modernism and Postmodernism within which it is located. Modernism, born out of the Enlightenment, maintains that there is one truth and that reality contains underlying structures that can be explained through all encompassing grand theories by rational, unitary individuals (Burr, 2003; Crotty, 1998). Examples of such theories in the social sciences include Marx positing economic structures as underlying social class relations, and much of what has been produced in traditional or mainstream psychology, such as psychic structures, cognitions and notions of personality. Positivistic Science, and the production of knowledge based on these modernist assumptions, holds that the nature or structure of reality is there waiting to be discovered, and there is a sense of continuity and linear progression in history and knowledge.

Postmodernism can be viewed as the culmination of a critique of, and extension beyond, modernist assumptions, positing that multiple truths and realities are possible and are historically and contextually situated. Postmodernism has been informed by numerous contributors and has been applied to many different purposes (Bertens & Natoli, 2002), making varied definitions of it possible. Crotty (1998) offers one definition, succinctly stating:

“Where modernism purports to base itself on generalised, indutiable truths about the way things really are, postmodernism abandons the entire epistemological basis for any such claims to truth. Instead of espousing clarity, certitude, wholeness and continuity, postmodernism commits itself to ambiguity, relativity, fragmentation, particularity and discontinuity” (p.185).

An important forerunner to postmodernism and poststructuralism (these terms are often used interchangeably (Crotty, 1998) but have been distinguished as a perspective on cultural and societal organisation and development (postmodernism) and the study of language and meaning (poststructuralism) (Henwood, 1996)) is structuralism. Both structuralism and poststructuralism question two things: the transparency of language, that is, that reality exists prior to and independent of being represented through language, and humanism, that holds individuals have a coherent, unchanging essence that enables them to be the author of their own experience and its meaning (Burr, 2003). Rather, through the framework of language, namely, the links between the signifier and the signified which occur between people, language is constitutive of reality rather than reflecting it. An important distinction between

structuralism and poststructuralism is that although Sassure demonstrated the relationship between the signifier and the signified to be arbitrary, once the relationship had been formed, it is fixed. Such a view accounts for how users of a given language are able to understand each other. Poststructuralism however holds that language, the relationship between signifier and signified, is not fixed, but fluid, provisional, context-dependent (Coyle, 2007b) and contestable, which accounts for meaning changing “over time, from context to context and from person to person” (Burr, 2003, p.54).

Discourse & Power:

It is this notion of the contestability of meaning where language may be seen as producing power relations and is pertinent to this study’s focus on power in supervision. The work of Michel Foucault made a significant contribution to such ideas within poststructuralism. He utilised archaeological and genealogical methods of historical analysis to describe and explain (Gutting, 2005) the conditions by which contemporary discourses or knowledges came into being, such as ‘sexuality’ and ‘madness’, and demonstrated the implications of this for power relations and subjectivity. Rather than any given discourse being an unquestionable fact based in reality, it is a version of an event or phenomenon that claims to be truth, and which then has implications for social practices. Foucault (1972, p.49) stated that discourses are “practices which form the objects of which they speak”. Elaborating on this definition, Law (1999, p.117) describes discourses as the “connection between statements and the prevailing social and power relations in which they are either uttered or silenced....[referring] both to what can be said and thought, and also to who can speak and with what authority so that meaning results from institutionalised

practices that maintain the given discourse” (Law, 1999, p.117). Dominant discourses privilege those versions of social reality which legitimise existing power relations and social structures (Willig, 2008), with discursive practices the “ways of talking, thinking, feeling and acting that when enacted, serve to reinforce, reproduce or silence that which does not fit with that discourse” (Law, 1999, p.119). This illustrates the close relationship between knowledge and power, indeed, Foucault views knowledge and power as inextricably linked, with “knowledge generating power by constituting people as subjects and then governing the subjects with the knowledge” (Ritzer, 2000, p.596). In this way power is exercised in social interaction rather than a possession (Rainbow, 1991), meaning it is an exercise rather than an attribute, with questions like ‘how does it work?’ being more appropriate than ‘what is it?’ (Kendall & Wickham, 1999). Importantly, for any given event there are numerous versions of it, numerous discourses, and so wherever there is power wielded by one discourse there is resistance to it offered by another discourse. For this reason, Foucault made a distinction between power and domination, “in a power relation, resistance is always possible, and therefore the directionality of influence (e.g. who influences who) can shift [while]...a state of domination fixes the relationship, rendering effective resistance impossible” (Guilfoyle, 2002, p.83-84).

Foucault, in conceptualising the subtlety of the exercise of power, moved away from juridical and strategic models to a governmental model in which “...one acts upon another not by extracting an act of their will [juridical] or by compelling them physically or even by limiting access to the objects over which they have control [strategic], but rather by acting on their actions, i.e., upon their conduct” (Thompson, 2003, p.121). So rather than power being overt, as is the case in juridical and strategic

conceptions of it, Foucault asserts that the operation of disciplinary power depends on it being invisible to some extent - "Power is tolerable only on condition that it masks a substantial part of itself. Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms" (Foucault, 1967, p.86; cited in Burr, 2003). Foucault (1979) illustrated this concept of disciplinary power and the notion of surveillance that informs it through his analysis of Bentham's Panopticon, which was a prison design of the nineteenth century that made it possible for prisoners to be observed at all times without them knowing if this was the case or not. The effect of this surveillance was that prisoners exerted discipline on themselves, conforming to the behaviour acceptable to those potentially watching them (i.e. the prevailing norms or standards of the prison setting), and this being internalised. What is important to note in this example is that the prisoner is portrayed as a self contained individual that is ascribed with certain characteristics (e.g. either conforming to or deviating from acceptable behaviour). Indeed, crucial to the notion of disciplinary power was the emergence of the modern concept of the individual (that is, self-contained) that occurred in the seventeenth and eighteenth century (Samson, 1990). Rose (1985, 1990, 1996), in his analysis of the emergence of the psychology discipline, showed how, in providing a means of describing this individual, psychology, as a language and set of norms, also constituted the individual. So in the example of the prison, notions of criminality and deviance supported by psychology are implicated in the prisoners being understood, by themselves and those around them, in a particular way and thus regulated.

Discourse, Power & Subjectivity:

Discourses offer subject positions that entail different rights and obligations for the participants, and so in addition to the implications of this for power relations,

discourses also produce subjectivity or identity. This idea of ‘discursive production of the subject’ was partly informed by Althusser, who decentred the humanistic sense of the individual through his concept of interpellation (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). This process of identification holds that the subject is formed through language in the moment that they are hailed and recognise themselves as the one hailed, so that in “the exchange by which that recognition is proffered and accepted, interpellation – the discursive production of the social subject – takes place” (Butler, 1997, p.5).

Relatedly, it is argued “the other plays a central role in constituting the individual’s self. Without the ongoing relationship to the other, our selves would be invisible...The other gives us meaning and a comprehension of our self so that we may function in the social world” (Madigan, 1999, p.154). Foucault went further with this idea of the self, subjectivity, being formed in interaction and language rather than from a humanistic notion of a coherent core. He did this by problematising the concept of ‘individuals’, preferring the term ‘subject’ or ‘subjectivity’ to highlight that the individual is actually a historically situated phenomenon that has emerged as the ‘site’ where discourses such as sexuality and madness can take place, as ‘technologies of the self’ (Kendall and Wickham, 1999). From this perspective, identities are the product of dominant discourses (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006), where “people are spoken through or by discourses” (Edley & Wetherell, 1997, p.205). As an example, a medical discourse framing human distress as ‘illness’ affords different subject positions, namely, the patient and doctor, the former passively receives medical treatment and advice while the latter dispenses it. In this situation, the subject position and rights it affords might be different if ‘patient’ was replaced with ‘customer’. Analysis of the subject positions offered within a number of discourses have been studied, such as addiction (Gillies & Willig, 1997) and masculinity (Edley

& Wetherell, 1997). This decentring of the individual is argued by some to be ‘the death of the subject’, with critics of Foucault arguing this removes any human agency, replacing the structural determinism of modernism with linguistic determinism (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). However, it has been argued that decentring is not to be confused with complete erasure of the self (Winslade, 2005). Kendall and Wickham (1999, p.54) argue that Foucauldian notions of power, knowledge and the subject are intricately intertwined and cannot be separated, precluding “questions of origin or of determinancy”. Important here is the notion of resistance, whereby the human agent may adopt or resist the subject positions offered, so that “change is made possible through opening up marginalised and repressed discourses, making them available as alternatives from which...[to] fashion alternative identities” (Burr, 2003, p.122). Davies and Harre (1990) developed the idea of discursive positioning based on Foucault’s subject positions, their notion of ‘positioning’ referring to “the process through which speakers adopt, resist and offer ‘subject positions’ that are made available in discourses...For example, speakers can position themselves (and others) as victims or perpetrators, active or passive, powerful or powerless” (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006, p.43). The work of Davies and Harre allows for people to be simultaneously produced by and producers of discourses (Burr, 2003; Winslade, 2005).

Rationale for Current Study:

A Critique of Supervision - Poststructuralist Considerations Applied:

The above distinction outlined by Proctor (2002) between structuralist and post structuralist notions of power may also be considered when analysing supervision itself. The definitions of supervision mentioned above arguably imply modernist

notions, indicating supervision as possessing an ‘essence’, that is, presuming that “...’true’ objective knowledge exists, has been discovered, and can be transferred from the mind of the knower (supervisor) to the mind of the knowee (supervisee)” (Edwards & Keller, 1995, p.144). From this modernist viewpoint, the nature of both supervisors’ and supervisees’ involvement in the supervisory process or experience is a consequence of inherent qualities of each individual, such as developmental level, and bound by what is taken to be truth or knowledge. As Copeland, Dean and Wvldkowski (2011, p.37) state, “[when] supervision stays within a modernist orientation to knowledge, the debate is always about the ‘right’ way to work with a client or the ‘right’ theory to apply to the work”. Holloway and Wolleat’s (1994) claim that supervision is necessarily a hierarchical relationship due to the supervisor’s task of imparting expert knowledge is an example of such modernist assumptions and can be seen as evoking structuralist notions of power, in which power is the possession of the supervisor by virtue of their ‘expert knowledge’.

However, post-structuralist ideas, particularly those of Foucault relating to discourses, power and subjectivity, will be drawn on, just as they have been in similar critiques of psychotherapy (Parker, 1999a), psychopathology (Parker et al. 1995) and counselling/psychotherapy training (House, 2003), to call into question or deconstruct supervision as an object existing independently of its observers and participants. Instead, supervision will be posited as a construct built and maintained through its language and social exchange (Davy, 2002), namely, supervision as discourse or social construction. A number of studies have drawn on such postmodern perspectives in exploring the concept of supervision, although Philp (et al, 2007) points out much more attention has been focused on its relevance to counselling than supervision until

recently. Much of this research seems to have predominately emerged from Family and Systemic therapy fields (Whiting, 2007; Anderson & Swim, 1995; Edwards & Keller, 1995; Turner & Fine, 1995) and so it would appear therefore that further research into postmodern perspectives of supervision within the counselling psychology context would make an original contribution to knowledge within this field. It must also be noted that many of these writings explore ways for supervisors to view supervision, seemingly giving little attention to supervision as constructed by supervisees.

Particularly relevant to this study is the work of Crocket (2007) who argues supervision as shaping of professional identity. Crocket (2004, p.172) writes, "...in supervision...the stories we tell of our practices and the ethics of those practices do not merely reflect our work, they produce us as practitioners and produce our practices...[positioning] supervision as a site of the production of professional selves". Crocket (2007, p.19) draws on Foucauldian notions of governmentality and disciplinary power, which involves the idea "that the institutions and disciplines of the modern world have us, its subjects, shape ourselves on the terms offered by these institutions and disciplines" to highlight supervision as an act of professional governance. Crocket (2007) extends Rose's (1985) notion of the 'psy-complex' to supervision as an equally shaping and self governing process. Parker (1999b, p.62), in reviewing the term, states that the 'psy-complex' is "the dense network of theories and practices to do with the mind and behaviour which divide the normal from the abnormal in order to observe and regulate individuals (Rose, 1985)". Put simply, it refers to a critique of the psy-based professions because, by virtue of producing standards by which normality and healthy functioning are measured, they shape and

police society. Crocket (2007) suggests supervision overtly and subtly shapes practitioners to become responsible, trustworthy and competent in their practice, and whilst she hastens to add that these are not unworthy of aspiring to, it is equally worthy to explore the strategies by which the participants in supervision act upon themselves to do so. In doing so, alternative discourses may be opened up. It must be noted that Crocket's (2007) research consisted of analysing an extract of a dyadic conversation between counsellor and supervisor, taken from a peer group of five counsellors and supervisors that met fortnightly over the course of a year. The current study will be exploring the shaping effects of supervision for counselling psychology trainees rather than for counsellors, and will do this by examining the talk of trainees in semi-structured interviews.

Parker (1992, p.6) states that discourses are manifested in texts, which he describes as "all tissues of meaning", implicating everything in the world that has been described, understood and so given meaning by people, as texts. How discourses construct our experience, and the associated power relations and subjectivities, can be examined "by 'deconstructing' these texts, taking them apart and showing how they work to present us with a particular vision of the world, and thus enabling us to challenge it" (Burr, 2003, p.18). Parker (1999, p.11) makes the point that "deconstruction is not a single thing, and cannot be summed up in a neat definition or be put to work as a discrete technique". Certainly, this ambiguity makes deconstruction difficult initially to understand or engage with. Ritzer (2000, p.475) describes deconstruction as "an alternative epistemological practice to modernism which shows how concepts, posed as accurate representations of the world, are historically constructed and contain contradictions". It is a process of problematising the dominant discourse, with its

privileged knowledges, which are necessarily, by definition, excluding and oppressing alternative discourses (Swan, 1999). Lerner (1999, p.39) explains that it “articulates the paradoxes and double binds inherent in discourses of power and institution, in order to minimise their violent repression of difference and the other”. In deconstructing supervision, how supervisees make meaning of their work with clients may be understood as narrative constructions created within the supervision discourse, restricted by the stories they have access to within the discourse of supervision, rather than as properties of ‘developmental level’ or any other modernist models. Therefore, part of deconstructing supervision may involve questioning modernist conceptions of it in order to reveal alternative voices or discourses, new meanings and possibilities.

In the UK supervision has been viewed as relevant and necessary for not just trainees, but qualified practitioners also. However, this research aims to explore the production of professional selves or identity in the context of trainee counselling psychologists, who are at the beginning of entering the profession of counselling psychology, and the disciplinary power relations mentioned earlier that impact on, or indeed produce it. Trainees in the beginning are said to often have a need for certainty (Anderson & Swim, 1995) and want to ‘know’ what to do and choose the ‘right’ model for intervention (Rizq, 2006). This may explain findings that beginner supervisees prefer direction and structure from their supervisors while advanced supervisees prefer a less structured supervision environment (Worthington & Roehlke, 1979, Heppner & Roehlke, 1984; cited in Quarto, 2003). As a kind of parallel to this, Crocket (2004) points out a dominant idea, based on developmental models, in supervision and even in some postmodern accounts of supervision practice, drawing a distinction between

beginner supervisees and more experienced supervisees in their ability to story a professional identity due to less experience of the former with professional language and knowledge. However, she goes on to argue that this suggestion that there is little material to draw on in storying the professional identity of a counsellor new to the field “is to edit out the possibility that the counsellor brings a richness of lived experience upon which they draw as they story their professional identity” (Crocket, 2004: 176). This in a way places supervision as a technology which consequently creates a problem of dependency where the supervisee’s capacity to have authority and agency, their own voice, can be deprived due to the rights to speak and for action offered by this subject position, just as is argued of the application of technology in therapy (Drewery & McKenzie, 1999).

Trainees or Women in Training: Whose accounts of power in supervision?

Feminist Perspectives

Some mention of Feminist literature is relevant at this point for two reasons. Firstly, although the current study was first conceived as an exploration of what being a ‘trainee’ meant for power relations in clinical supervision, the fact all the respondents that were to end up participating in the study were women demands an acknowledgment that this study is not just about trainees but women trainees, and to explore this. Secondly, in so far as Feminism in all its forms (e.g. socialist, radical etc) is underlined by the aim of overcoming the subordination of women (McNay, 1992), its theory and research is relevant for other subordinated groups such as those who are non-white, non-Western, non-heterosexual and in the case of this study, the *non-supervisor (i.e. supervisee)*. This recognition of feminist perspectives can be seen, at the most superficial level, in the title of the study - ‘Women Counselling Psychology

Trainees' Accounts of Clinical Supervision: An Exploration of Discursive Power' – in that the phrase 'women counselling psychology trainees' was used rather than 'female counselling psychology trainees' to reflect the distinction made by feminist theorists between the terms 'sex' and 'gender', which have traditionally been understood as interchangeable and as a consequence justifying male privilege (Simpson & Mayr, 2010).

However, it is important to specify what kind of Feminism that can be drawn on given the current study's poststructuralist, social constructionist perspective. As McNay (1992) points out, there are limitations to assimilating a primarily philosophical form of critique (poststructuralism) with feminist theory which has an emancipatory goal. Nonetheless, she argues that this is possible to an extent, and indeed a number of feminist theorists have utilised poststructuralism (e.g. Sunderland, 2004; Baxter, 2003). Such works can be included in what has been referred to as 'third wave' or poststructuralist feminism, which views the term discourse to refer to the constructive nature of language for social reality, subjectivity and practice rather than simply to a dialogue exchange.

A number of feminist studies have explored gender in relation to supervision (e.g. Nelson and Holloway, 1990; Holloway & Wolleat, 1994; McHale & Carr, 1998; Doughty & Leddick, 2007), although these have tended to frame differences in language between men and women in terms of 'deficit' (i.e. women's language as lacking), 'dominance' (gender inequality) and 'difference' (different social roles). Nelson and Holloway (1990), for example, studied the patterns of involvement in supervisory discourse comparing gender. Using a quantitative method of analysis,

they found that both female and male supervisors often fail to encourage their female supervisees' assumption of power in the supervision session. They also found that female trainees, in deference to a more powerful authority figure, relinquish power significantly more often than male trainees. Nelson and Holloway's (1990) study, along with that of McHale and Carr (1998), were based on an understanding of gender as 'difference' as outlined above and defined supervision discourse as the exchanges that occur between supervisor and supervisee during live supervision. Similarly, Doughty and Leddick (2007) in their review of literature regarding gender and supervision, use language that appears to reflect an assumption of fixed gender differences.

Numerous feminist research has occupied the poststructuralist, social constructionist perspective by challenging gender as a binary opposition through viewing language differences as manifestations of men and women being constructed or performed, emphasising the multiplicity of femininities and masculinities (Pichler & Preece, 2011). Examples include Lester's (2008) study of how women's gender is constructed in the workplace, and Lynch and Nowosenetz's (2009) exploration of gender construction amongst science, engineering and technology students. However, there appears to be a lack of research into the construction of gender in the counselling psychology supervision context. Therefore, the current study may be seen as making a feminist contribution. Some may question the validity of such a claim given that the researcher is a man, with Biever, De Les Fuentes and Cashion (1998) for example stating that "to believe that you can represent a group of which you are not a member may be interpreted as being a continuation of an authoritarian or patriarchal position". However, Lazar (2005) argues that the social identity of the researcher as a man or a

woman per se is not a problem in feminist research and whilst the researcher acknowledges the complexities and tensions within this debate, this study through its exploration of women counselling psychology trainee's accounts of supervision is believed to be of some value for feminist perspectives.

Counselling Psychology Context:

This study seeks to contribute to the line of research undertaken by Crocket (2004, 2007) but argues that the particular epistemological and theoretical context of counselling psychology, a profession said to value postmodern ideas such as pluralism and ambiguity (Rizq, 2006), may have implications for the available discursive resources for trainees in this supervision context. Counselling psychology is relatively new (Milton, 2010), with its birth as a profession regarded to be with the establishment of the Section of Counselling Psychology in the British Psychological Society (BPS) in 1982, although it was not fully recognised until 1994 when divisional status was achieved (Orlans & Scoyoc, 2009). Counselling psychology has also been accused of being ambiguously defined, with Cross and Watts (2002) pointing to the British Psychological Society (BPS) describing it in terms of how it is distinguished from other approaches to counselling rather than stating what constitutes the profession. The distinction between counselling psychology and other professions such as clinical psychology is not absolute in terms of methods of practice and work settings, with much overlap between them (Woolfe, 1996). Indeed it has become “a broad church, committed to exploring a range of approaches to inquiry and recognising the contribution of differing traditions” (Strawbrdige & Woolfe, 2009, p.4), and applied in numerous settings. However it is argued to be distinct and unique when its historical development and philosophical underpinnings are made explicit.

Counselling psychology emphasises the importance of psychological theory and research being applied to the practice of counselling, to address the perceived failure of counsellors to evaluate their practice (Woolfe, 1996). As demonstrated by McCleod (1993, p.2) for example who defined a counselling psychologist as “a counsellor who has initial training in psychology, and who uses psychological methods and models in his or her approach”. As such the term ‘scientist-practitioner’ has often been used in describing this profession. However, in exploring the philosophical assumptions of the profession as described in this way, some have argued counselling psychology to be a ‘hesitant hybrid’ (Spinelli, 2001) and a ‘conflation of paradigms’ (Williams & Irving, 1996). This is because counselling psychology also holds onto a humanistic value base, privileging “respect for the personal, subjective experience of the client over and above notions of diagnosis, assessment and treatment” (Lane & Corrie, 2006, p.17). Spinelli (2001, p.4), writes:

“...while psychology adopts a logico-empiricist paradigm whose view of the individual remains mechanistic, and whose purpose is not simply understanding but also entails notions of prediction and control, counselling (and psychotherapy), on the other hand, is principally an enabling and empowering process which adopts a phenomenologically-derived perspective wherein notions of intentionality and meaning are the central concepts”.

Orlans and Scoyoc (2009), in outlining psychology’s historical development, highlight its emergence as a separate discipline during a period when positivism became the dominant philosophy. This led psychology to increasingly define itself as a natural science by the 1950’s, holding that through objective, rational science, laws

could be discovered allowing the prediction and control of human behaviour. However, alongside this focus on positivistic methods of theory and practice, from early on there was also an interest in consciousness and subjective experience as central to psychology, and so the appropriateness of applying methods of natural science to humans was questioned (Strawdrige & Woolfe, 2009). Van Duerzan-Smith (1990) argues that mainstream psychology was too preoccupied with such a narrowly defined view of science (i.e. natural science model) to adequately attend to what it means to be human, and counselling psychology emerged in response to this. As can be seen, whether the pairing of ‘counselling’ with ‘psychology’ is viewed as a “logical absurdity” (Williams & Irving, 1996, p.6) rather depends on the form of science, namely natural science model or human science model, and its associated epistemological assumptions, upon which the ‘psychology’ element is based. Strawbridge and Woolfe (1996) observe that the activities, role and identity of counselling psychology must be explored in the economic, political and social contexts in which they operate, and consequently as counselling psychologists increasingly work in settings, such as the NHS, which are dominated by the medical model, pressure on what it means to be a counselling psychologist intensifies.

Epistemological and Ontological Considerations:

It was stated at the outset of this thesis that a social constructionist perspective would be adopted, and so some qualification of what is meant by this is appropriate. Giles (2002, p183) defines social constructionism as “an understanding of the world (i.e. ‘reality’) as the product of historical, cultural and social interaction, rather than fixed, universal ‘essences’”. However, it is argued that there is not one form of social constructionism (Potter, 1996) with those who’s work could be described as such

bearing only a 'family resemblance' (Burr, 2003). Cromby and Nightingale (1999, p.6), in their review of what unifies these different forms, state that all proponents of social constructionism "agree that social processes, particularly language, are central to...experience...endorse notions of historical and cultural change...accept that knowledge and activity are intimately related...[are] critical of the beliefs, methods and techniques of mainstream psychology, and advocate...alternative models of the person, research and practice". All forms of social constructionism, in relation to epistemology, which is the study of the nature of knowledge, assert that knowledge is relative (i.e there are multiple knowledges rather than knowledge) and is socially constructed rather than an ultimate truth to be discovered. However, there has been disagreement in relation to ontology, a branch of philosophy involving the study of existence in the world and questioning what is reality. What has become known as 'the realism-relativism debate' refers to the degree to which materiality or the extra-discursive is seen to be important.

Relativists (micro social constructionists) hold their position to be "social science par excellence" (Edwards et al., 1995, p.42) because everything is discursively constructed, so no truth claims are out of bounds, with all views being equally valid (Willig, 2008). This is argued to have made a critical psychology that makes interrogating the truth claims of traditional psychology possible (Parker, 1999b). Some have argued such relativism makes it difficult to refute the claims of revisionist historians as equally valid, as Geras (1995, p.110) states, "...if truth is wholly relativised...there is no injustice". However, relativists refuse to accept these as a "bottom line, a bedrock of reality that places limits on what may be as epistemologically constructed or deconstructible" (Edwards, et. Al., 1995, p.26).

Rather, relativists have sought to demonstrate that references to physical and material realities such as death and furniture are discursive constructions rhetorically deployed.

Critical realists (that is, macro social constructionists) highlight that the relativist position translates to an inability to take any political position, making it “difficult for us to sustain the project of a critical psychology” (Parker, 1998, p.2). Critical realists are not to be mistaken as assuming a naïve realist position, whereby our perceptions are an accurate reflection of reality. Indeed, they, like relativist social constructionists, hold language to be productive rather than representative and question a universal knowledge and essential truth. However, critical realism does assert that discourse is not completely free-floating and independent of any reality, but is dependent to some extent on the extra-discursive.

Having broadly outlined this debate, what is its significance for the current study? Deciding on which side of the fence this research positions itself can be determined somewhat by the subject matter, namely power within supervision as an institutional practice, which is its focus. Parker (1989, p.61) argues “...we have to refer to the ‘real’ in some way in order to provide an adequate account of power and the development of different forms of power in different cultures”. Along similar lines, Parker and Burman (1993, p.158) note that discourse analysis, a social constructionist methodology, risks falling into idealism if it only attends to language at the expense of attending to the materiality of power, stating that “although power is certainly (re)produced in discourse, power is also at work in the structural position of people when they are not speaking” (p.158). Based on this it is suggested the current study must adopt a critical realist (macro social constructionist) position to address its topic

adequately. However, what might the extra-discursive consist of? The writings of Bhaskar (1989) and Cromby and Nightingale (1999) have theoretically identified embodiment, materiality and institutions as extra-discursive, with the latter being of particular interest for the current study. Willig (1999, p.48) has provided an example of the relationship between discourses and institutions, stating “the racist discursive practice of checking passports at airports reproduces the material basis of the institution (in this case the nation state) and thus reinforces its power”.

Taking the above into account, this study will attempt two things. Firstly, in line with its relativist epistemological position, it will explore how participants’ talk constructs particular versions of supervision and how these open up and shut down possibilities for them. Secondly, in line with its ontological realist stance, some consideration will be given to tentatively identifying institutional objects and spaces that may afford some discourses to emerge more than others. I say tentatively as there is some argument as to the extent this can be achieved from participant accounts alone, which will be elaborated on in the discussion. It must also be emphasised that adopting a critical realist position is not inconsistent with poststructuralism and Foucauldian discourse analysis, an assertion that will also be explicated in due course.

Conclusion/Summary – Aims for this study:

The above literature review has attempted to provide some outline of what supervision is held to be, along with questioning supervision’s taken for granted importance. This critique has drawn on poststructuralist thinking to posit that assertions of supervision being a benign and necessary process or activity rely on modernist assumptions. Utilising Foucault’s work on discourses and power, it is the

contention of this study that supervision may be conceptualised as a social construction that has implications for practice and subjectivity, and that this process, within the context of counselling psychology, with its particular epistemological underpinnings, is worthy of further exploration. By this problematising of dominant discourses, alternative discourses may be opened up (Swan, 1999), adhering to critical psychology's notion of resistance to any given discourse being possible (Parker, 1999c). The application of postmodern perspectives to supervision has not been pursued to the extent as it has for therapy, and when it has done, the context has been family and systemic therapy supervision rather than counselling psychology supervision, and consisting primarily of theoretical papers rather than empirical research. The current study will attempt to deconstruct counselling psychology supervision, specifically for women in training whose rights to speak and act will be determined by that which is afforded to them by the discourses informing supervision. It must be noted that in undertaking an analysis of women counselling psychology trainees' talk about supervision and their experiences of power within it, the researcher makes no claims to truth (a modernist ideal), acknowledging that this is only one construction or reading that is possible. However, it is hoped it will serve to bring attention to the ways that supervision discourses may shape women counselling psychology trainees' practices and subjectivity and in this sense revealing power relations that occur. Such a critical perspective is argued to be valued by counselling psychology as part of its reflexivity.

METHODOLOGY:

Methodology Defined:

Methodology has been described as the strategy, process, or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods (Crotty, 1998). Ponterotto (2005) maintains that methodology should follow from the position taken on epistemology and ontology. That is, the epistemological and ontological stance adopted in research must be considered in determining the most appropriate methodology. For much of psychology's history, quantitative methodologies have dominated research due to the hegemony of positivism-empiricism, not just in this profession but in most forms of 'traditional' science (Woolgar, 1996). Research from this epistemological and ontological perspective, known as the 'scientific method', would attempt to measure and control defined 'variables', whilst maintaining the researcher as separate from and unbiased in this process, in order to predict and control the phenomenon under study (Ponterotto, 2005). However, this approach to studying human beings became increasingly criticised in the 1960's and 1970's, in what became known as the 'crisis in social psychology', for "reflecting a limited, mechanistic model of human beings" (Coyle, 2007, p.15). Parker (1994, see pages 4-8 for a detailed account) outlines some of the problems relating to the 'old paradigm', including ecological validity, ethics, demand characteristics, volunteer characteristics, experimenter effects, and language. Emerging from this critique was a shift towards qualitative research, as part of a call to a naturalistic paradigm where attention could be given to the complexities of behaviour and meaning in context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; cited in Morrow, 2007). Morrow (2007) outlines the core characteristics of qualitative research to include studying individuals in the natural world, learning about the meanings they make of

their experiences, investigating them in social interaction and in context, and reporting research results in the everyday language of participants.

Embracing qualitative research has been argued to contribute to the methodological and philosophical diversity of counselling psychology (Morrow, 2007) and offering forms of inquiry that can be better integrated with clinical practice (McLeod, 1996). This is not to suggest that qualitative methods are without their own challenges (see McLeod, 1996). As Coyle (2007, p.20) warns, assuming the use of qualitative methods to automatically lead to direct access to research participants' subjectivities and to a democratisation of the research process is a mistake, as "all research products are the result of a dynamic and inescapable interaction between the accounts offered by participants and the interpretive frameworks of the researchers...[and] addressing the power differential between the researcher and the researched involves much critical, honest, reflective dialogue and flexibility". Therefore, any consideration to use qualitative methods should not be an arbitrary decision, but based on explicating and choosing between the different philosophical positions from which qualitative research may be grounded, in order to most appropriately address the particular questions and objectives of a study. For example, Morrow (2007) distinguishes between postpositivism, interpretivism-constructivism and ideological-critical theories, which have some overlap with Madill et al (2000), tracing realist, contextual constructionist and radical constructionist strands, and Reicher (2000)'s experiential and discursive approaches. All of these terms refer to different positions along a continuum onto which all research may be placed in regards to each of their epistemological and ontological assumptions, i.e. what claims they make about what can be known and what exists as reality (see Figure 1).

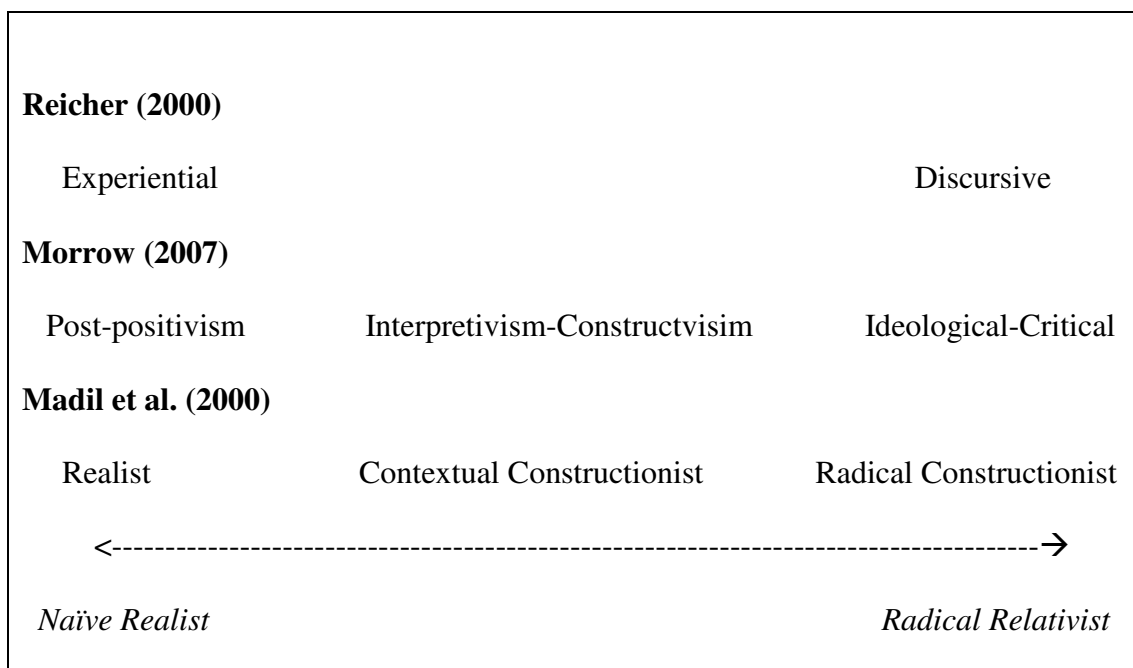


Figure 1. Classification of different qualitative epistemologies (adapted from Willig, 2008, p.153).

Pertinent to locating the current study along this continuum is the ‘turn to language’, which was informing a growing questioning, in a number of disciplines from the 1950s onwards, that “language provided a set of unambiguous signs with which to label internal states and with which to describe external reality” (Willig, 2008, p.92). Rather, language was increasingly held as productive and constitutive. This research is located within this turn to language and discourse, by looking at the supervision experience as being socially constructed rather than a product of inherent qualities of either supervisors or supervisees. Therefore, in terms of methodological position, this study may not be described as being at the positivistic or naïve realist end of the spectrum. However, it cannot be placed at the other, relativist, end either, because in order to address issues of power and subjectivity (that is the focus of the study) a critical realist position must be adopted, as holding onto some notion of materiality or reality is necessary to investigate these issues (Parker, 1992).

The turn to language first established itself in psychology through the publication of Potter and Wetherall's (1987) *Discourse and Social Psychology Beyond Attitudes and Behaviour*, which critiqued psychology's cognitivism, and gave examples of discourse analytic approaches to research. Since then there has been a significant amount of discourse analytic research, with discursive psychology and Foucauldian discourse analysis being the two most dominant approaches that have emerged. These approaches differ in terms of the intellectual traditions from which they have developed, their associated epistemological positions and consequently the types of research questions they address (Willig, 2008), which will be outlined below. Despite these differences, both forms of discourse analysis are intended to address questions beyond those typically asked by mainstream research, such as regarding cause and effect, influential factors or between-group differences (Giles, 2002).

Discursive Psychology:

Discursive psychology was inspired by conversation analysis and ethnomethodology and as such shares their concern with the negotiation of meaning in local interaction (Willig, 2008). Rather than language directly representing internal mental states or cognitions, discursive psychology emphasises language as productive, conceptualising these states as discursive actions that people do rather than what people have or are (Willig, 2008). In discursive psychology the focus of analysis is on the performative nature of talk in managing the interests of those in interaction, and involves identifying discursive practices in talk and how people use these to achieve social and interpersonal functions. Examples of such practices include accusations, criticisms and mitigations (Edley and Wetherell, 1997).

Discursive psychology is commonly associated with a relativist position to epistemology and ontology in that it is focused on how certain constructions of psychological phenomena are brought into being through the use of discursive practices, but is not concerned with anything beyond that, i.e. the extra-discursive. For this reason a limitation of this approach is its inability to address questions of subjectivity or power.

Foucauldian Discourse Analysis:

Edley and Wetherell (1997, p.205) include Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA) in what they describe as ‘top-down’ forms of discourse analysis, that “focus on issues of power, ideological practice and social processes...to highlight the ways in which people are spoken *through* or *by* discourses [italics in original]”. It shares with discursive psychology a prioritising of the role of language in the constitution of social and psychological life, but unlike discursive psychology which focuses primarily on the immediate, interpersonal interaction, FDA moves beyond this to examine the relationship between discourse and subjectivity, practices, and the material conditions within which they occur (Willig, 2008). This concern for the role of discourses in social processes of legitimation and power in FDA highlights it as appropriate to be used given this study’s interest in power in supervision. FDA holds that the ways in which we experience ourselves, for example, as ‘sick’ or ‘healthy’, ‘competent’ or ‘incompetent’ (perhaps more relevant for trainees, part of the study’s topic), are informed by discursive constructions and practices. This approach takes into consideration the historical development of discourses and the relationship between discourses and institutions, meaning that how discourses have changed over time and the impact of this on subjectivity, and how discourses both reinforce and

legitimate, and are validated by, existing institutional structures are examined (Willig, 2008). The publication of *Changing the Subject* (Henriques, Holloway, Urwin, Venn & Walkerdine, 1984), with its examination of the role of psychological theories in constructing objects and subjects, was instrumental in bringing this approach to discourse analysis to the field of psychology.

Those using discourse analysis within a poststructuralist/Foucauldian framework are reluctant to prescribe a set method, as it may be viewed as reflecting positivistic claims to truth (Graham, 2005) rather than eschewing formulation (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008). Billig (1988) for example contends that conducting discourse analysis requires a scholarly analytic mentality rather than a rigorous methodology. However, Graham (2005) points out that being explicit about what one is doing is different from a systematised method, which would indeed be contradictory to poststructuralism's commitment to keeping possibilities open and 'undecidability'. A number of thinkers have tentatively outlined guidelines that may be usefully kept in mind for conducting this form of analysis (e.g. Parker, 1992; Kendall & Wickham, 1999). Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine (2008) suggest four stages or themes as a guide for analysis. These include problematisations (examples where discursive objects and practices are made problematic and consequently visible), technologies (practical forms of rationality for the government of self and others), subject positions (the cultural repertoire of discourses available to speakers on which to ground claims of truth and manage their moral location in social interaction) and subjectification (the practices and authority through which subjects seek to regulate themselves). These suggestions will be utilised in the current study, but Willig's (2008) six stages of analysis will be primarily drawn on, due to its perceived clarity for the researcher and

its application in previous studies (e.g. Sykes, Willig, & Marks, 2004). It must be acknowledged that Willig's (2008) stages of analysis cannot be considered a full analysis in the Foucauldian sense as they do not engage with the history of discourses which Foucault's 'geneology' and 'archeology' accessed. However, Willig (2008) offers them as a 'way in' to FDA.

Reflexivity:

Researchers in all forms of qualitative research are viewed as part of the process of knowledge production and must be aware of what they bring to bear on the research, by way of reflection on their actions and reactions at each stage of the research (Lyons & Coyle, 2007). Finlay (2002) highlights that the researcher influences the collection, selection, and interpretation of data, with research being a product of the researcher, participants, and their relationship. Such reflexivity is particularly important in the case of discourse analysis given that it is not 'reality' that is being studied but the discourses constructing it which is the focus of study. Parker (1994) suggests that the researcher's subjectivity should be viewed as a resource rather than a problem. Burr (2003, p.156) argues that reflexivity may be used in research to highlight that the researcher's account of the event or phenomena studied "is simultaneously a description of the event and part of the event because of the constitutive nature of talk. This open acknowledgement of the social construction of one's own account as a researcher undermines its potential claim to be the only possible truth".

Placing such importance on reflexivity, the current study deliberately outlines the context of the researcher at the outset. The researcher's "personal links to the topic are

not in themselves a sufficient basis for research, but they are a probable starting point for the project. They are not seen negatively as bias but as a position to be acknowledged” (Taylor, 2001, p.17). Reflexive commentary sections will be included wherever possible to give some background and meaning to the way the research was carried out and interpreted by the researcher. In an effort for this process of reflexivity to be meaningful rather than a token exercise, the commentaries will immediately follow the section of the research to which they apply, rather than isolated from them and potentially implying their lesser importance (Coyle, 2007), as could be assumed if located in a separate chapter.

METHOD:

Participants:

The participants in this study were six women in counselling psychology training. Obtaining a large and representative sample is not a necessary aim for discourse analysis, as it is the discourse itself and not the speakers of the discourse that are the focus, and so what is important is having an adequate size of text or sample of discourses to study, rather than the number of speakers (Wood & Kroger, 2000). It must also be noted that the sample size for this study exceeds the minimum of five required for a postgraduate thesis using discourse analysis (Turpin, Barely, Beail, Scaife, Slade, Smith & Walsh, 1997). As Willig (2008) argues, time and pragmatic considerations are pertinent when deciding on sample size and Loewenthal (2010) points out that most relational researchers will recruit a small sample and typically through opportunity sampling. Whilst a large sample is not necessary, having a sample from a population where the discourses of interest are likely to be available is. Given that the topic of interest was supervision and the implications of being a trainee within this institutional practice, it was hoped that counselling psychology trainees' talk in an interview setting may show at work the discourses relevant to the topic.

Trainees in their first year of training were excluded as it was felt they would not be sufficiently exposed to the supervision experience. Recruitment was initially focused on trainees from other universities and other cohorts to the researcher (in the case of participants attending the same university as the researcher). However, participants from the researcher's own cohort were not excluded because, as Burman (1994) argues, the researcher's prior knowledge of participants from non research contexts may facilitate greater disclosure and reflexive commentary in the interview.

Participants are indicated through pseudonyms in the analysis in order to protect their identities. The table below includes some demographic information about the participants. In addition to these details, participants were asked to confirm that they were either in the penultimate or ultimate year of their course, as well as what university they attended. Three participants attended University of Roehampton, while one participant each attended University of Surrey, City University and West of England University.

Participants (pseudonyms)	Age Range	Gender	Ethnicity
Andrea	25-35	Female	White American
Bella	25-35	Female	White European
Connie	25-35	Female	White European
Diane	25-35	Female	Middle Eastern
Eve	45-55	Female	White British
Glenda	45-55	Female	White European

Table 1: Participant Demographics

Willig (2001, p.97) warns against including “‘standard’ demographic material...because, from a discourse analytic point of view, provision of such ‘information’ is, in fact, a way of constructing identities”. However, the above table of information was not included to suggest particular social categories capturing the essence of people placed within them, but to give some context to the discourses identified in the data and this rationale was felt appropriate.

Ethics:

Ethical approval for this study was granted by Roehampton University's Ethical Board before the collection of data commenced. It was the intention of the researcher to conduct the study as ethically as possible, guided by the BPS's Code of Ethics and Conduct (BPS, 2006) and the Division of Counselling Psychology's Professional Practice Guidelines (BPS, 2006), and in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the university. It was anticipated that participants may experience some distress in reflecting on, and discussing, their experiences given the topic of interest, i.e. power in supervision. Furthermore, qualitative research generally involves participants disclosing sensitive information and the relationship between interviewer and interviewee is often very intimate. Because of this, the researcher's "responsibility to treat participants with high regard and respect is paramount" (Morrow, 2007, p.217). This was addressed by providing potential clients with sufficient information outlining what participating would involve, ensuring they were aware of their right to withdraw from the study, and providing a debriefing at the end of the interview. Additionally, the researcher was probably ideally placed to be aware of and sensitive to difficulties experienced by participants due to his own counselling psychology training (Morrow, 2007) and experience of being a trainee in supervision.

Reflexive commentary: The sensitive nature of the topic became apparent when discussing what participating would involve with a number of the participants prior to commencing the interviews. One interviewee enquired about when the study would be published, anxious to ensure she was no longer in a particular supervisory relationship by the time of publication. In this instance I reminded her of the steps that would be taken to maintain her anonymity and an estimation of study completion. Similarly,

another participant had concerns after the interview about the depth of what she had revealed. The measures that would be taken to maintain her identity, both in the interview transcript and the study write up, were explained to her and her right to withdraw from the study was reiterated. In another case, the participant enquired about what instances a supervisor breaking an ethical boundary would be reported if it were raised in the interview. These instances drove home to me both the risk of perceived repercussions participants were taking through their involvement and this being a manifestation of the power being investigated. It also demanded further consideration of ethical issues, as my focus until this point had been on treating participants ethically, and being mindful of their clients, but less so on my ethical responsibility of when to report ethical violations perpetrated by supervisors.

A further ethical consideration was the issue of participant deception. Whilst making every effort to fully inform participants about the nature of the study, the decision was made to not specifically state the intended method of analysis, i.e. FDA. The reason for this was to encourage participants to talk about their felt experiences, where the talk itself was important, rather than them distancing themselves from their experiences and talking about their talk, due to knowledge of the analysis to be used. This was not felt to be inconsistent with the principle of non-malevolence prescribed by the BPS's Code of Ethics (2006), and necessary/justified to undertake the study successfully.

Procedure:

Participants were recruited predominantly through an announcement in the Division of Counselling Psychology's regular e-newsletter, and through word of mouth. After

initial contact from participants expressing their interest, they were informed about the study, and that their participation would involve an hour and a half interview, including debriefing. A date and time was then agreed to conduct the interview at a convenient location, in most instances at the university the participant attended. All interviews were carried out in a private space free from interruption to maintain their confidentiality.

Data collection:

Parker (1999d) argues that texts within which discourses manifest are limitless, enabling FDA to be carried out “wherever there is meaning”, such as written documents, paintings, and stories for example. Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine (2008), in their reading of Foucault as resisting reducing discourse to meaning, are more specific and outline five kinds of texts suitable for FDA, one of which is ‘social interaction’. This form of text can include a variety of speech activities and settings but the current study used semi-structured interviews for a number of reasons. Firstly, Potter (1996, p.134) argues that interviews are an effective way of accessing the range of interpretive repertoires and discourses a participant has available and can be “as complex and vivid as any other type of social interaction”. Secondly, Byrne (2004; cited in Silverman, 2011) highlights qualitative interviewing as enabling the exploration of voices and experiences believed to have been ignored or misrepresented in the past, which has some appeal given this study’s focus on women counselling psychology trainees.

After explaining what participation in the study would involve, prior to the interview each participant was given a briefing about the study (see Appendix A for Participant

Information Sheet) and signed a consent form (see Appendix B). For each participant, information regarding their age and gender, ethnicity, the university they attended and their academic year was requested both to reconfirm eligibility for participation in the study and to have some detail of the life circumstances of each participant, as a way of providing the context for the reader. Participants were then asked the following four questions:

- 1) Can you describe how you have found your experience of supervision in your development as a counselling psychologist?
- 2) In what ways has being a trainee counselling psychologist influenced, or been influenced by, your supervision experiences?
- 3) Can you tell me about your notions of power in supervision?
- 4) Is there anything else you would like to say about power in supervision, taking into account your circumstances obtained at the beginning of the interview, such as your age or gender?

These questions were designed to facilitate participant discussion with regards to supervision and power in supervision, taking into account their status as trainee counselling psychologists as well as other contextual elements (e.g. age). Throughout each interview, facilitative questions, as outlined by Kvale and Brinkmann (2008), were used to promote obtaining a thorough understanding of participants' expressed experience. For example, the use of probing questions, which allow the interviewer to obtain more precise descriptions. The four questions forming the framework for the interviews, outlined above, were not necessarily asked in the same order across all participants. That is, whilst question one regarding the influence of their supervision in their development as counselling psychologists was always the first question asked, there was some variation in the order of asking questions two and three, according to

how each interview evolved. A further variation related to question four. For the first interview conducted (with Andrea), following the pilot study, the demographic information was asked for at the end and was not explored with the participant as to its influence on the topics discussed during the interview. On reflection, this was a consequence of initially viewing this information as something to be used later on by the researcher as background information to provide context. However, for all subsequent interviews this information was asked for at the start and revisited with participants, to explore if they drew on it as important in their constructions of supervision and power in supervision. This shift was due to recognising the importance of allowing participants to construct their own meaning of their context for what was discussed, rather than removing it from them to assert the researcher's own meaning at a later point. To not do this would be replicating what Gergen and Gergen (1991, p.86) attribute to traditional, positivistic research, where participants are "not encouraged to reflect on their situations within the study". The duration of each interview was between 55 minutes to 80 minutes and was followed by a debriefing.

Reflexive commentary: Wood and Kroger (2000) argue that discourse analysis should focus upon naturally occurring discourse, and focus groups are often viewed as moving in the right direction towards achieving this 'naturalness'. Therefore, focus groups were first considered as a method of data collection for this study. However, semi-structured interviews are considered appropriate for discourse analysis (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008). Moreover, Speer (2002) has questioned the usefulness of making distinctions between 'natural' and 'contrived' data, arguing that within this approach to analysis, where it is assumed participants construct rather than reveal

meanings, bias is inevitable and interesting. Therefore, the research-prompted setting of interviews was considered to be an equally 'genuine interaction' (Potter & Wetherell, 1995). Weighing up these various considerations, in the end interviews were decided upon as the method of data collection for its practical benefits such as being able to co-ordinate locations and timings with participants more easily than some other methods (e.g, focus groups).

In order to practice conducting interviewing and to allow an opportunity to refine the interview questions, a pilot interview was conducted with a fellow counselling psychologist in training who fulfilled the eligibility criteria. Initial analysis and reflection on the pilot interview indicated that the order of questions first devised could benefit from being altered to meet the purposes of the study. Specifically, to facilitate participants to speak of power relations through their constructions of supervision and allow discourses around supervision besides power to emerge, it seemed necessary to ask about their experiences of supervision generally *before* explicitly inquiring about their notions of power in supervision rather than after. Because of this decision to alter the question order for further interviews, it was decided to treat the pilot interview as a pilot only and not include it in any further analysis undertaken. A second reason for excluding the pilot interview from subsequent analysis was that it turned out that all respondents to the recruitment phase were women whereas the pilot participant was a man. This was interpreted as being important and it was decided to focus on their constructions of supervision only, rather than attempting to make some cross gender comparisons, as having only one man's constructions to compare to was seen as making this difficult to do

meaningfully. Possible reasons for only women expressing interest in participating and the implications for the study will be explored in the discussion.

Before commencing the data collection I was anxious to conduct the interviews correctly to ensure that I obtained the best data possible. This translated to a concern over the order of questions to ask, and how to conduct the interview to foster meaningful data but without leading or directing participants. However, it began to dawn on me that although such concerns are common for the novice researcher interviewing (Marshall & Rossman, 1999), they perhaps reflected a mindset owing to a more positivistic position to research where it is assumed the process of interviewing can be somehow standardised across all interviews to control variability. Therefore, I realised I needed to be aware of the idiosyncracies of each interview - such as variation in the way and order in which questions were asked - impacting on the data constructed in these interactions, but not pretend that they could be eliminated or weren't valuable and meaningful.

Data Analysis:

The process of analysis once the interviews had been conducted involved listening to and transcribing the recordings. The level of analysis is the primary determinant of the level of transcription that is required (Walton, 2007). As Kvale and Brinkmann (2008, p.186) state, the “question ‘what is a useful transcription for my research purposes’ is a more constructive question than ‘what is the correct valid transcription’”. As this study would be adopting a Foucauldian approach to analysis, the researcher was less concerned with micro-textual details or paralinguistic features of talk, such as pauses, emphasis and overlaps, than with identifying discourses contained in the content of

the talk (Giles, 2002). Transcribing was completed by the researcher, in a similar way to Gillies and Willig (1997) who do not make a note of micro-textual details of talk due to their macro focus.

Following on from the conducting and transcribing of the interviews, the next stage in the process of analysis, as guided by Willig (2008), involved identifying the different ways the discursive object was constructed in the data, with the discursive object focused on depending on the research question. For the current study, 'supervision' was posited as the discursive object of interest. Any instances of reference to the discursive object, both implicitly and explicitly, were underlined as the transcripts were read through. The differences in how the discursive object was constructed were then focused on in attempting to identify the wider discourses surrounding the discursive object that could account for the different constructions. For example, Parker (1994) in exploring possible discourses emerging from analysing a children's toothpaste container, identifies 'medical' discourse through noting references to chemical components contained in the product and professional treatment. Examining the action orientation, or functions, that the discourses were fulfilling and how they did this was then undertaken by identifying the alternative versions of events, alternative discourses, that the existing ones may function to sideline, and identifying variations that occurred within an individual participant's discourse (Coyle, 2007). A related step was identifying subject positions, the positions within the text that could be taken up by speakers as afforded by the discourses identified. The penultimate and ultimate stages of analysis then followed from the subject positions identified. Namely, exploring the implications of different subject positions on what could be

said and done (practice) and what could be felt, thought and experienced (subjectivity).

Reflexive Commentary: Due to the epistemological position of social constructionism underlying discourse analytic research, Potter and Wetherell (1987) suggest the researcher suspends a belief in language as representing underlying social and psychological realities, seeing the data instead as constructing a particular version of events. This was initially difficult to do, as I would find myself attributing the way the particular participant spoke about supervision to them as an individual. This temptation to speculate about the intentions of the speaker can be difficult to resist but is necessary in discourse analytic research (Giles, 2002). For this reason, I applied each stage of analysis to the data as a whole, rather than completing the process for each set of data (i.e. each transcript) individually. I found this enabled me to step away from modernist, naïve realist assumptions to explore how discourses afforded subjectivities rather than subjectivities constructing discourses as it were.

Another difficulty involved the process of identifying discourses, as it necessarily required me to interpret the different discursive constructions based on my cultural awareness and knowledge, which can be an uncomfortable process (Walton, 2007). According to Parker (1999, p.10), realising that the qualitative research process is an activity of interpretation, the researcher must take responsibility for the sense they are making, and reflexivity thus becomes a part of this.

Evaluative criteria:

Reliability and validity criteria, commonly used in evaluating research, are inappropriate for this study as they are based on the assumption that the researcher and researched are independent of each other and ‘objectivity’ can be achieved. That is, they contradict the social constructionist epistemological assumptions underpinning the study. As Pugh and Coyle (2000, p.87) argue, “discourse analysts cannot point to the ways in which the social world is constructed through language and then make an exception for their own language use”. In discourse analysis and most qualitative research, the researcher shapes and influences the research process, and so alternative criteria must be specified from which this study may be evaluated adequately. Due to the diversity of qualitative research in terms of epistemological positions, there is little consensus on appropriate evaluation criteria as there is for traditional, positivistic research. A number of authors have attempted to identify criteria for evaluating the quality of qualitative research, such as Henwood and Pidgeon (1992) and Elliot, Fischer and Rennie (1999).

Yardley (2000) recommends ‘sensitivity to context’ (i.e. the context of theory and socio-cultural setting is acknowledged), ‘commitment and rigour’ (i.e. substantial engagement with the research topic and sense of completeness of data collection and analysis), ‘transparency and coherence’ (i.e. detailing each aspect of the process of data collection and analysis, and the ‘fit’ between the research question and the philosophical perspective adopted), and ‘impact and importance’ (i.e. the socio-cultural, theoretical and practical implications) as present in good qualitative research. These criteria, Coyle (2007) argues, can be appropriately applied to discourse analytic research and will be adopted for the current study. Other discourse analytic studies

have asserted the importance of including as many extracts from the text as possible to show the reader how analytic interpretations were reached and allow them to judge whether these were justified (Coyle, 2007; Pugh & Coyle, 2000). To facilitate this, transcripts of all the interviews have been included in the appendices to give some idea to the reader of how the interviews were carried out and in understanding the context of extracts from which interpretations were made by the researcher. One of these transcripts will also include notations made in the side columns by the researcher in identifying discursive constructions in the text. It is hoped this will add to an understanding of how the analysis was actually carried out.

ANALYSIS

Introduction:

The aim of this study was to critique supervision by drawing on poststructuralist thinking to explore power in supervision in the context of counselling psychology and the implications of power for trainee counselling psychologists' identity. The intention was to analyse how supervision, and the discourses informing it, legitimatised some meanings over others and offered certain ways of being for trainees, and in doing so show the power relations at work. Therefore the first discursive object of interest was supervision. However, it became apparent in reading the transcripts that another discursive object that was prevalent was power. Whilst each participant in the interviews was asked about their experience of supervision generally before notions of power in supervision was raised, all participants orientated themselves to notions of power in supervision from early on in the interviews. Possible reasons for this and problems surrounding them will be discussed in the discussion section of this paper. Power was therefore a second discursive object that was analysed. It is important to point out that these two discursive objects are not necessarily distinct from each other within the data, with some overlap or mutual influence between them. For example, by constructing power in supervision, speakers were also to an extent implicitly constructing supervision. The following analysis will begin with the discursive object of supervision. This will include how it is explicitly constructed before moving to power as the discursive object, paying attention to how constructions of power appear to implicitly construct supervision. The subject positions available within these constructions, and their implications for practice and subjectivity, will then be examined to demonstrate the power relations at work. In acknowledgement of Foucault's view of power and resistance as interconnected,

alternative or counter-discourses that offer resistance to dominant discourses will then be explored.

The first step of analysis after conducting and transcribing the interviews involved reading through the text a number of times in order to become familiar with it, underlining any statements interpreted as referring to the discursive objects, either explicitly or implicitly, as they became apparent through this reading process. Such noted statements, through their referencing to the discursive object, could then be seen as constructing it in some way. As an example, Bella in her opening dialogue seems to construct supervision as a complement to, and accompanying, her training through which she has achieved learning – “it is one of the most vital part of the training...that I learnt a lot through” (App. E: L4-6). This process was carried out for each transcribed interview. The references were then grouped as examples of the different constructions of the discursive object, based on interpreted similarities between them (Gillies & Willig, 1997). Whilst aiming to adhere to the evaluative principle of transparency (Yardley, 2000), by using linguistic evidence from the transcribed data to support the interpretations made, it was not possible to include every reference to the discursive object made in every interview due to limits of time and space for this study. However, it is hoped that enough excerpts have been included to qualify sufficiently for the reader how the discourses were identified. Indeed, Widdicombe (1995, p.108) warns against the tendency towards ascriptivism that she argues can occur in a rush to identify the political significance of discourses in a text. This refers to “the tendency to impute the presence of a discourse to a piece of text without explaining the basis for specific claims”. Furthermore, it must be

noted that another reader may interpret these examples in others ways, as this is only one reading of meanings where many are possible.

Discursive constructions of Supervision (as learning, as test, as insight):

Careful reading of the data showed supervision constructed in a number of ways. In a number of the transcripts, supervision is constructed at times as vitally important and helpful in facilitating learning for the trainee. For example, Bella refers to supervision as:

Extract 1 (App. E: L4-25)

“the most vital part of the training...that I learnt a lot through...because it’s a way of understanding how you work and being challenged sensitively...[by] somebody who has experience and...you trust their clinical opinion...even peer supervision...[was] a great learning opportunity”.

Glenda similarly frames supervision as a support to her learning:

Extract 2 (App. I: L157-163)

“it makes me feel supported, it makes me feel that if I have a problem or with a client or I I feel like I’m floundering with a client, I have somewhere to go to discuss it and get some illumination...I had one client who turned quite nasty...and I found being able to talk about it in the supervision was quite helpful because um you know this does happen to therapists quite a lot”.

Andrea seems to imply that supervision should consolidate learning and training, through constructing supervision as failing to do so for her:

Extract 3 (App. D: L54-55)

“I don’t really feel that process of consolidating some of my training really happened in supervision”.

Supervision is also constructed as an assessment or test.

Extract 4 - Bella: (App. E: L230-231)

“they assess you directly and they assess you indirectly as well because they comment on your work”.

Extract 5 - Diane: (App. G: L42-44)

“I was quite intimidated by him because again you know he was my supervisor, he was going to give me an evaluation”.

Extract 6 - Glenda: (App. I: L90-92)

“I felt with him that he’s kind of testing me and and if I stood up to him and he could see that I could take it he’d back off and stop doing that”.

Thirdly, supervision is constructed as revealing trainees’ blind spots or bringing insight.

Extract 7 - Bella: (App. E: L41-53)

“they can observe things that you cannot observe about the pattern that you do have with the client...there are some blind spots that you can’t really see for by yourself”.

Extract 8 - Andrea: (App. D: L12-15)

“I think when you’re a trainee or I was at least you’re really clinging to any bits of supervision because you’re sort of overwhelmed, you’re with different clients and really kind of valuing that ability to kind of explore what’s really going on”.

Supervision Discourses (Expert & Psychodynamic):

A discourse, as defined by Parker (1992, p.5), is “a system of statements which constructs an object”. Willig (2001), in outlining her second stage of analysis, is not particularly clear about exactly how the discourses in a text are identified. Rather, by way of explanation she gives the following example:

“within the context of an interview about her experience of her husband’s prostate cancer, a woman may draw on a biomedical discourse when she talks about the process of diagnosis and treatment, a psychological discourse when she explains why she thinks her husband developed the illness in the first place...Thus, the husband’s illness is constructed as a biochemical disease process, as the somatic manifestation of psychological traits...within the same text”.

It would appear that Willig in this example focuses on particular words, such as ‘diagnosis’ and ‘treatment’, that may be viewed as networks of meaning (Gillies & Willig, 1997) or coherent ways of talking about a particular object (Breheny & Stephens, 2007) in order to identify the discourses involved. Parker (1994) suggests ‘free associating’ in this process of identifying discourses at work, whereby the researcher attempts to stay as open as possible to the different social worlds that the

text may be calling into being. Further support for claiming what discourses are contained within a text may be drawn from previous discourse analytic studies that have identified such discourses (Nikander, 2008b). The construction of supervision as learning and a test may be associated with an expert discourse. Drawing on expert discourse, one person in social interaction is positioned or labelled as an authority on a topic due to the knowledge and experience they possess, and can therefore act as a source of knowledge for non-experts to learn from, and as an assessor of whether such learning is adequately achieved. A second discourse that is present, when supervision is constructed as bringing insight, is psychodynamic discourse. This discourse can reinforce expert discourse, in that the things that need to be learned by supervisees and tested for are constructed as involving unconscious processes that require expert knowledge and self-awareness to interpret. Expert and psychodynamic discourses contain assumptions about relationships operating within them. For example, they may be seen to legitimise a hierarchical relationship between the non-expert, un-self-aware and the expert, self-aware. This hierarchy is demonstrated by extract 1 when learning in supervision is constructed as requiring “somebody who has experience”. Learning is positioned as possible with other non-experts, although this is inferior to learning from someone one can “trust”, implied through the comment “even peer supervision”. Extract 2 may also be read as invoking an expert discourse, and possibly a psychodynamic discourse, and thus contributing to a hierarchical relationship, as it seemingly implies that Glenda is in the dark in understanding what is going on with her client and that supervision, the supervisor, can give her this understanding – “get some illumination”. Extract 3 implies that supervision should be about learning, but through learning being absent for this participant it would seem that supervision is constructed as *not* learning, contradicting the previous two

extracts. Therefore, it is not immediately apparent that this extract appeals to an expert discourse or reinforces a hierarchical supervisory relationship. However, exploring the context within the text from which it was extracted, that is, its function or action orientation, as will be done shortly, may provide some explanation for this. In extracts 4, 5 and 6, a hierarchical relationship is alluded to in that the person doing the assessing or evaluation is the supervisor, not the supervisee, with responsibility for action lying with the former, and this process is referred to as intimidating. A psychodynamic discourse, and a hierarchical relationship it may support, is demonstrated in extracts 7 and 8, where “blind spots” are pointed out by the supervisor, who helps the supervisee to understand “what’s really going on”. This conjures notions from psychoanalytic theory of unconscious processes between supervisees and clients that it is implied the supervisor can help illuminate. Further support for the construction of supervision as learning and test for trainees invoking an expert discourse is the presence of a sense of progression at other points in the accounts. That is, within an expert discourse is the presumption that those learning from an expert may move from naivety to possessing knowledge themselves, so that the further along on a training programme one is, the more knowledge you are presumed to have gained in moving towards becoming an ‘expert’ oneself. Therefore, references to progression in terms of development in the accounts appeals to expert discourse. For example, when Glenda states:

Extract 9 (App. I: L4-5 & L26-28)

“I enjoy it more now than I did when I first started with it and at first I was intimidated by it um because I felt that I really didn’t know anything...my confidence

in supervision has changed enormously. I would not say very much and I would just observe a lot whereas now I take part more”.

This notion of progression, emerging from an expert discourse, is also evident in the following interaction with Eve:

Extract 10 (App. H: L669-675 & L680)

INT: But trainee status has a positive and negative um influence on you in a way

Eve: Mmm

INT: It allows you being a trainee you can make mistakes and it's forgivable or?

Eve: Mmm. Not so much now, I don't think in towards the 5th year but definitely earlier on...at this level you shouldn't be doing that.

The two extracts above illuminate expert discourse to also be productive. For example, although expert discourse can be inhibitive – by informing hierarchical relationships where those constructed as not possessing the particular legitimated knowledge are limited in their ability to participate and co-construct meanings – it can also be productive for trainees when they are deemed to have accumulated the expert knowledge and thus able to ‘take part more’. Expert discourse also appears productive, even within a hierarchical relationship arrangement, as it enables the trainee to ‘make mistakes’ and not be punished for them (i.e power as domination).

Despite these constructions of progression the further along in their training participants were, due to the expert discourse, participants constructed a distinction between being in training and being qualified for how supervision was experienced.

That is, a number of participants constructed their status as trainees as implicated in supervision as hierarchical relationship. For example, Connie says *“when you go to the university it feels that you are powerless because there are people who have the knowledge and the expertise...if you are in supervision as um qualified person it’s different because you feel um yeah you are a more complete professional”* (App.F: L332-339). Adding to this she says *“you go to supervision as a student....your ground can be easily shaken because you carry the uncertainty from the fact that you’re still a trainee...when you finish your training um it is it is like it is implied that now you are prepared now, you are ready”* (App. F: L356-358 & L386-388). Diane states *“the title that you get is quite puts you in a powerful position”* (App. G: L709-710). Eve states *“supervision wouldn’t be the same if you were out of training I think”* (App. H: L148-149). Eve goes on to describe a scenario where she tried to introduce knowledge she had acquired from outside the supervision group to try to help a fellow supervisee: *“people were saying ‘well you know I can’t get my head around this client and I’m not sure where to go or what clinical work to do whatever* INT: Mmm P: *Um and I had been I had done some formulation training...I knew there was some feelings in the in some parts of the counselling world that...the word formulation I think scares people but anyway I brought in [technical label for a formulation perspective]..way of looking at things...I thought she was going to have a fit in the room you know she went sort of bright red and said ‘of course you don’t have to’”* (App. H: L174-183). One way of interpreting this would be that due to Eve’s status as a trainee, any knowledge gained from outside the sphere of knowledge of the supervisory context she was in was deemed inappropriate, irrelevant, or what Foucault called subjugated knowledge – one accorded lower status than scientific knowledge (Allred, 1996, p.149). It must be said however that Eve’s appeal to

experience was related to scientific knowledge itself, as the idea of formulation stems from the medical model (Johnstone & Dallos, 2006), complicating the interpreted meaning of this construction.

Problematising supervision as hierarchical relationship – discursive constructions of power:

The hierarchical relationship formed by the constructions of supervision and the discourses they draw on, as outlined above, is problematised by participants in constructing power. Power is constructed as “always there” (App. E: L223 & L238) due to this hierarchical relationship where the supervisor is always in the position of evaluating and assessing supervisees, and “might use that somehow” (App. E: L236). The implication being that it could be used to the supervisee’s detriment by inhibiting supervisees being able to pass the training they were on that required supervisor’s reports, and therefore not access professional status and employment. Power is therefore also constructed as negative – “negative meaning came to my mind” (App. E: L249); “I associate it with something bad...with manipulation” (App. F: L226-227). Power is constructed as being avoidable through not challenging the hierarchy of the supervisory relationship. For example, Bella distances herself from power in her account by being compliant with her supervisor’s authority – “I don’t have a big problem with that with the power...because I consciously trying not to...I took a position that I would not challenge that...so I adjusted my behaviour in terms of not to become an issue” (App. E: L254-266). However, this in itself demonstrates power relations at work as what she can say and do is inhibited. Power is constructed as difficult to describe and subtle – “it’s just a feeling that I got”; “she doesn’t do anything in particular...it’s more an attitude...if I was to give a definition of power I

couldn't" (App. F: L133-136 & L223-224). A number of the participants construct power as involving a blurring or breaking of professional boundaries by supervisors. This was in terms of changing supervision times, supervisors being late for supervision, attempting to instigate dual relationships with supervisees and discussing the content of supervision sessions with people outside of the supervision group. Power is constructed as when participants' supervisors adopted an authoritarian subject position within supervision as a hierarchical relationship - "power is about um feeling superior and better and being able to control...it's like saying to you 'I decide I kind of decide when you start talking, when you stop talking and I have the last word and I'm the experienced one, my view my view's what counts not yours'" (App. F: L243-248).

In summary of the above, power is constructed as contained within supervision as hierarchical relationship, when an authoritarian rather than egalitarian relationship is fostered by the supervisor. An example of this is the following:

Extract 11 – Connie (App. F: L117-122)

"one supervisor is ah quite intimidated by different opinions and the supervisor that doesn't facilitate the openness I mean um quite judgemental, quite fixed in her ways and in her opinions and quite feels the power and the difference between us. So the other one feels more equal feels more like a person to person thing where we both explore and we try to help the client and ourselves to develop you know"

During the interviewing stage, the researcher became aware of participants' accounts of power in supervision revolving around supervisors, with a noticeable absence of

their own role or influence. That is, constructions of power appeared to evoke modernist notions of power as oppression or dominance going in one direction (i.e. from supervisors). However, this study adopted Foucault's conceptualisation of power as more subtle and *productive*. Relatedly, positioning theory suggests speakers are not just produced by discourses but are also *producers* of discourse. Therefore, in a number of the interviews participants were asked if they had any power. Eve responded that any power she had was never more than that of her supervisors and often less – “the responsibility of you know there's only fifteen percent in the relationship but sometimes the power shifts over one way I think and um I've never felt anymore than half the power in relationship with supervisor” (App. H: L828-830). She acknowledged that as a trainee, “you would encourage...the power because then you lack the responsibility in some ways” (App. H: L837-838). Bella states: “the finer I adjust and eventually I don't have any problem is a powerful thing...if I was totally honest I would express my anger and my anxiety but somehow I couldn't be totally honest so I expressed my anxiety and then immediately she got in that position of having to support me” (App. E: L578-579 & L630-632). In these instances the power relationship is productive in that responsibility can be avoided (in the case of Eve) and support can be elicited (in the case of Bella). That is, it is in these trainees' interests to remain within an expert discourse informed hierarchical supervisory relationship.

Power Discourses (Expert, Developmental and Gender):

Similarly to constructions of supervision as learning, test and insight that support supervision as hierarchical relationship, constructions of power as authoritarian also resonates with an expert discourse. ‘Authoritarian’ has been defined as “favouring or

enforcing strict obedience to authority at the expense of personal freedom” (Oxford Dictionary online), with authority defined as “the power to influence others, especially because of one’s...recognised knowledge about something”. This notion of ‘recognised knowledge’ may be seen as resonating with being an ‘expert’. However, two other discourses were also identified as relevant to discursive constructions of power in supervision, namely, developmental discourse and gender discourse.

Notions of people moving in a developmental trajectory across the lifespan from having no knowledge, and not being able to see or understand something and moving to a state of knowing or understanding, are prominent in contemporary talk about development. Breheny and Stephens (2007) for example, in their analysis of constructions of adolescence and motherhood, identify a developmental discourse within the accounts, constructing adolescents as having shared characteristics related to their age. Analysis of the data in the current study revealed that age was constructed as impacting on supervision as hierarchical relationship and power as authoritarian supervision. For example, some participants constructed the older age of supervisors as associated with greater knowledge and experience. Bella states: “It’s this assumption that when someone is older, they have more experience. Because of the age and more mature usually” (App. E: L700-701). This may be seen as drawing on a developmental discourse as it is constructing older supervisors as possessing certain characteristics, such as greater knowledge, because of their age. Conversely, based on this discourse, when the participants and supervisors were around the same age, either both younger or both older, this appeared to create difficulties for a hierarchical relationship being constructed. For example, Bella, one of the younger participants states “maybe the fact that she’s female and she’s young INT: Mmm P:

maybe there's more competition...when you are very close in age maybe maybe things feel, this competition" (App. E: L676-678 & L690-691). In such circumstances, the equally young supervisor is constructed as needing to appeal to the fact they are qualified to assert their authority, as Bella says "she did say something along the lines [laughs] 'at the end of the day I'm five years qualified counselling psychologist" (App. E: L350-351). As an example of developmental discourse being evoked in an older participant's account, Eve states "I'm around about the same age and they've experienced twenty, thirty years of practice um so you know I sometimes feel they are trying to separate out the affinity we might have through being the same age...'I'm really the boss here' sort of thing" (App. H: L744-750). Similarity in age here seems to be constructed as making it difficult for a hierarchy between this participant and her supervisor to be maintained, calling on the supervisor to create distance between them to do so. On the other hand, rather than similarity in age being constructed as a cause for supervisors asserting their authority and power, it is also constructed as having an equalising effect. For example, Glenda says "I think maybe because of my age I'm at an advantage to some students because I think supervisors may be a bit more conscious about the way they speak to me than the way they speak to someone younger" (App. I: L373-376). Developmental discourse also appeared to create a tension for older participants within the supervisory relationship. For example, Eve says "it feels quite difficult to be this age and you know re-training um learning new things...there's something perhaps a little bit um I was going to say humiliating" (App. H: L701-704). The implication possibly being that being in a position of not knowing and learning from others presumed as more knowledgeable during the process of training and supervision is at odds with the expected characteristics of someone of an older age. That is, the expectation to be competent

and knowledgeable themselves, and therefore to be constructed as trainee is reported as “humiliating”.

Analysis of the data also indicated that gender discourse was being evoked. For example, a number of the participants construct their supervisors as authoritarian when they are female, citing competition between them as involved in this. Eve - “in terms of dynamics whether this woman didn’t like me particularly and part of me being a woman was a part of that or I threatened her and I was the same sex as her sort of thing I don’t know” (App H: L740-742). Bella - “I thought that maybe the fact that she’s female... maybe there’s more competition” (App. E: L675-678). Diane – “it’s actually about young female supervisors who may not be, I mean I don’t know if there was any kind of female rivalry going on in that relationship” (App. G: L536-538). Numerous studies have explored how certain characteristics have often been attributed to one gender or the other in society and how this has shaped the subjectivity of each gender. For example, Baxter (2003, p.92) in her study of classroom talk in a British secondary school identified a discourse of gender differentiation which she defined as “a conventionalised set of ways of differentiating individuals’ identities in the world primarily according to their sex or gender”. In this instance it would seem that some of the participants are associating certain behaviour such as competitiveness to interactions between women. Gender discourse also seems to be evoked when Diane makes a distinction between male and female supervisors – “very cautious with male supervisors in general...heterosexual men that’s when I feel really intimidated um because...they may do something or say something that may be inappropriate...I only have one male supervisor but...he’s I guess a homosexual male so with him there is, I can just be myself, I don’t feel any kind of tension” (App. G:

L108-109 & L127-129 & L142-144). This would appear to be constructing male supervisors as threatening or not depending on their sexuality as perceived by her, and having implications for her subjectivity. That is, whether she feels cautious or able to be herself.

Action Orientation:

Establishing the action orientation or function of each of the constructions of supervision, and the discourses that form them, requires a closer examination of the discursive context in which they are deployed. Practically, this involves noting what precedes and follows each of the constructions of the discursive object, to identify what functions the construction might serve such as promote one version of events over another or assign responsibility (Willig, 2008). Due to time and space limitations, examining the action orientation of each and every reference contributing to each discursive construction of supervision will not be possible. As suggested, the above outlined discourses legitimise a hierarchical relationship, where responsibility for the speakers' learning, assessment and insight is assigned to supervisors. For example, regarding extract 1, supervision is constructed as learning in response to a question about the influence of supervision on development ("can you describe for me how you have found your experience of supervision in your development as a counselling psychologist?"). It is possible here that the notion of learning is introduced by the use of the word 'development' in the question. Drawing on an expert discourse may allow the speaker, Bella, to confer responsibility for her learning and understanding onto supervisors as the 'experts' who must then treat her "sensitively" because of her lack of knowledge as a trainee. In the dialogue following extract 1 Bella appears to equate how much she is able to "open up" and not be

“defensive” with the “fit” with supervisors, and the responsibility for achieving this fit is constructed as lying with the supervisor rather than with the supervisee as a result of the expert discourse evoked. It seems to be implied here that opening up and being non-defensive are positive or valued qualities. Extract 2 follows a section of dialogue where Glenda speaks about increasingly being able to “hold my own”, which she defines as deciding not to be intimidated by the supervisor’s authority. The extract is in response to being asked how holding her own has influenced her development. In this context, the extract constructing supervision as learning, evoking an expert discourse, may enable Glenda to accept supervisors’ authority enough to “have somewhere to go” where she can feel that her experiences with clients can be defined by a more experienced other as normal – “this does happen to therapists quite a lot”. In examining the surrounding text from which extract 3 is taken, it appears that in response to the initial interview question regarding the influence of supervision on her development as a counselling psychologist, this participant particularly focuses on what it means to be a counselling psychologist. Specifically, she highlights that her supervisors were not counselling psychologists and would explore her work with clients from only their own theoretical perspective, the implications of this being it was difficult for her to “explore what it means as a counselling psychologist to be working with this client...what they were offering was really useful but it’s coming from sort of a quite narrow um perspective” (App. D: L30 & L36-37). This construction of counselling psychology as having a broader perspective than one theoretical position resonates with how counselling psychology is defined in the literature (Milton, 2010) and by the BPS. The function then of constructing supervision as not learning, as depicted in extract 3, may be to question the position of supervisors as ‘expert’ and as able to consolidate learning for counselling

psychology trainees if they are not counselling psychologists themselves. Bound up in expert discourse is the notion of the completion of a high level qualification indicating a higher level of knowledge and expertness than a qualification designated as lower. Perhaps alluding to this, this participant suggests that working towards a qualification perceived as higher than that obtained by her supervisors may have undermined them as experts and therefore also undermining the hierarchical nature of the supervisory relationship – “a lot of the supervisors that I had were trained to a level below what I was aiming to achieve and I don’t know, at times I felt that there may have been some awkwardness because of that” (App. D: L19-20). Related to this, she constructs her level of training as a reason why some of her supervisors appear to give her less attention or support – “I sort of felt like you know the counselling psychology training they know you know it’s very long it’s very intense...there’s somehow this feeling that we don’t need maybe as much support or something” (App. D: L152-154). Nevertheless, the subject position taken up by this participant through much of her account would be described as one of compliance with supervision as hierarchical relationship, as will be described below. This may be explained by her construction of counselling psychology at different points in the interview as having an unclear or contradictory identity – “what are we, what do we do”; “we’re kind of into that whole counselling world obviously but then we’re doctors, so it’s kind of a contradiction INT: Mmm P:I think where as clinical psychologists you know they’re in hospitals, they work with psychiatrists for the most part, it’s quite clear but we’re kind of half that, half hippy dippy kind of alternative side”; “kind of uncertain who we are and they’re uncertain of who we are” (App. D: L51, LL222-227 & L251-252). It would seem that such a construction, defined by a lack of clarity, functions to make it difficult for this participant to assume their own

authority or expertness and step out of a hierarchical supervisory relationship. In contrast with this construction of her own identity as unclear, one of her supervisors is constructed as having a clarity in their identity, derived from their knowledge and experience, and from their theoretical perspective, that leads to them being described as a guru – “here’s this sort of guru...the insights that he came up with were just incredible and I do think there is an intimidation factor...here’s somebody who’s done Jungian training which is pretty extreme and practicing for like years and years” (App. D: L276 & L303-304 & L306-308). Here it seems that despite the level of training to be a counselling psychologist (i.e. doctorate) potentially offering this speaker a subject position of authority, their supervisor’s authority is constructed as superior.

Subject positions:

Reviewing what subject positions may be available to the speakers when supervision is constructed as a hierarchical relationship where learning, assessment and insight takes place, appear to include a position of compliant and submissive trainee in relation to the supervisor and their views. This may be seen in the following comments. Andrea: “trying to kind of fit with the supervisor’s ideas of what should be going on...biases coming from the supervisor that means that you kind of you play along, because that’s the tone they’re setting” (App. D: L280-285). Bella: “I need to be careful how I’m going to say things. So in supervision I need to say ah good point good point I need to make her feel that she’s my supervisor that she’s there and I’m there, I need to make her feel like that...I don’t feel that challenging her is going to lead anywhere rather than coming more trouble on myself” (App. E: L374-377 & L388-389). On the other hand, the subject position available to supervisors when

supervision is constructed as hierarchical relationship, drawing on the discourses outlined above appeared to be an authoritative subject position where they act as if they are right.

Practice:

Different discourses and the subject positions associated with them offer different possibilities for action for the participants, for what can be said and done by them. For example, Willig (1995) in her study exploring heterosexual adults' accounts of condom use and their implications for sexual practice found that unprotected sex was related to a marital discourse, in which marriage was constructed as incompatible with condom use. In the current study the above constructions of supervision as learning, test and insight are concerned with expert and psychodynamic discourses, affording subjects to be positioned as the compliant and submissive non-expert. From such a subject position, participants may say little in supervision that is contrary to this subject position, such as asserting their own views over those of the supervisor, or formulating clients' problems in ways other than those offered by the supervisor, to maintain the hierarchical relationship the compliant subject position sits within. For example, Connie states "if I wasn't a trainee she wouldn't have spoken in the same way and I wouldn't have to stop, I mean to shut up and listen to her...there is an inequality that they can say if they agree or if they don't but you can't because you're a trainee" (App. F: L373-378). Here the compliant subject position restricts being able to disagree or do more than just listen. Eve states "just starting counselling training...I would have just accepted what this woman was offering and thought it was right and um you know I didn't question it" (App. H: L637-640). These quotes also illustrate the subject positions available to supervisors and their implications for practice. That

is, it would seem they are constructed as able to control who speaks in the supervision interaction and whose interpretation of the meaning of what supervisees bring to supervision is accepted as the correct one. For example, Connie states “she wants to label things and have the power to say ‘this is this, this is that’ um and doesn’t allow you to go on and on and describe your experience” (App. F: L143-145). Supervisors are also constructed as able to use their expert knowledge to deflect challenges from trainees as a problem with the trainee rather than addressing their own role. For example, Eve says “when I tried to complain she sort of manipulated very cleverly manipulated the situation into...something wrong with me...I was pathologised by being angry” (App. H: L70-72 & L79). Another example, Bella says “another trainee challenged her and said ‘well I’m quite annoyed because you’re late’ and instead of taking responsibility...she started saying to the trainee that ‘I realise I sense that you are passive aggressive towards me’...she put all the focus on the trainee” (App. E: L321-326 & L334-335).

Subjectivity:

As Willig (2008) suggests, making links between the discursive constructions used by subjects and their implications for subjective experience is the most speculative stage of analysis as there is no direct relationship between language and mental states.

Therefore no claims can be made about what different speakers actually *do* feel, think or experience, only what *can* be felt, thought or experienced from within various subject positions. Nevertheless, statements from the data, where they indicate participants’ reported feelings and experience, will be drawn on to support claims made about subjectivity. In relation to the subject position of compliant trainee, based on the construction of supervision as hierarchical informed by the discourses outlined

above, it could be argued that subjects may feel less powerful than supervisors. This is implied by Bella's comment, "I don't feel that challenging her is going to lead anywhere" (App. E: L388), and by Eve, "I didn't feel like I was in a position to do anything about it" (App. H: L49-50). This construction of supervision which leaves little room for supervisees to express alternative views (be non-compliant), left participants experiencing supervision as "scary", "intimidating", "tiring", "unpleasant", "daunting", and feeling "annoyed", "frustrated", "persecuted" and "forced to kowtow to the supervisor". Some participants also described feeling cautious, not trusting their supervisors and not being able to be themselves with supervisors. For example, Bella says "it would be great if you had a very open person that you could really um be even more yourself" (App. E: L407-408), the implication being this had not been her experience. Within this hierarchical relationship, the discourses at work mean that other constructions such as supervisee as their own expert are sidelined, as reflected in Eve's comment – "there was a lot of focus on her and there was her as the expert and it was it was sort of it it is very difficult to build up the confidence in yourself ... what she was doing was 'right'" (App. H: L168-169 & L172). Such subjective experiences appeared to be drawn on by participants when constructing power as present in supervision. However, it must also be pointed out that, in line with the Foucauldian notion that discourses are also productive or enabling, there was evidence within the accounts that participants may also feel safe or reassured to be compliant within a hierarchical supervisory relationship because the discourses informing it may serve the function of normalising feelings about clients or removing their responsibility. In extract 2 for example Glenda is reassured that her difficulty with the client is 'normal' by being in hierarchical relationship with her supervisor who can label it as such. Rather than negative, being in a hierarchical

supervisory relationship may also take pressure off trainees to be perfect and give them confidence to be able to try different things with their clients.

Resistance through alternative constructions – supervision as protection for clients and as human relationship:

The purpose of highlighting alternative constructions of supervision to those outlined above is to make explicit within this analysis Foucault's (1982; cited in Hook, 2001) notion that resistance is a feature of every power relationship. It is important to note that Foucault's conception of resistance shifted from one of 'tactical reversal' to one of 'care of the self' as his model of power shifted from a strategic to governmental emphasis (Thompson, 2003). In his latter conceptualisation - where power manifests not through force or repression but more subtly through subjects freely regulating their conduct via technologies of the self based on dominant discourses and knowledges - resistance in the form of self formation is possible when alternative discourses and knowledges are opened up from which new subjectivities may be constructed. Through identifying contradictory discourses, resistance is possible that can "challenge current self-understandings and [sic] create the space for new forms of subjectivity" (Sawicki, 1994, p. 307; cited in Sternod, 2011, p.295), and to refuse to respond within dominant meanings (Parker, 1992).

Following this, in contrast to the constructions of supervision as learning, test and insight by participants which appeared to maintain and legitimise a hierarchical relationship between participants and supervisors, supervision is also constructed as

an activity that should be for the benefit and protection of clients within the participants' accounts. Examples are the following extracts from Connie and Eve:

Extract 12 (App. F: L39-43)

“the supervisors provide the same um qualities should try with me or with the supervisee to kind of achieve this way of being in the supervision. Because what my client brings to me with so much effort I bring to the supervisor in order to help the client. So if I'm not, if I'm judged if I feel judged then I'm not free to communicate all that I feel, the client wont be helped”.

Extract 13 (App. H: L89-92)

“that is why I complained in the end was that though it was intolerable for me um you know ultimately it was entirely unethical situation where we weren't being, our clients weren't being supervised”.

Both accounts construct supervision as for the benefit and protection of clients, which may be drawing on a 'professional' discourse, where both participants and supervisors are constructed as professionals who must put the needs of clients first. However, in Connie's talk she still occupies a compliant and passive position as she appears to allocate responsibility for clients' welfare to supervisors, in that whether Connie feels judged and restricted in communicating in supervision is dependent on supervisors adopting an authoritarian subject position or not. So in this instance prioritising the welfare of clients requires supervisors to not assume an authoritarian subject position, implicitly showing expert discourse to be more prominent than professional discourse.

It is in Eve's account that professional discourse may be seen as enabling this participant to resist the compliant and submissive subject position and adopt a more assertive subject position, leading to the possibility of a different 'self-formation'. For example, she complains about her supervisor not because it is "intolerable" for her but because her clients weren't being supervised, implying that their welfare was at risk. This discourse therefore justifies her not being compliant with her supervisor adopting an authoritarian subject position.

These extracts demonstrate that the construction of supervision as for the welfare and protection of clients offers different subject positions, depending on whether the expert discourse or professional discourse is more prominent. In the former, a compliant subject position is available, while the latter could be said to position subjects as assertive in the supervisory relationship. In terms of practice, the 'responsible for client' subject position affords supervisees the obligation to act in the interests of the client, which may involve acting contrarily to the views of the supervisor and the hierarchical relationship. The implications for subjectivity might be that supervisees feel empowered to assert themselves in the supervisory relationship believing that to do so would be in clients' interests.

Power is constructed as when supervisors adopt an authoritarian subject position within supervision as hierarchical relationship, while the absence of power is constructed as being marked by an egalitarian relationship between supervisee and supervisor, where supervision is constructed as a human relationship. This egalitarian aspect is constructed as being characterised by supervisors taking into account supervisees' feelings. For example, Bella states, "even as a supervisee how I have been feeling at a particular period he addressed that" (App. E: L150-151). The phrase

‘even as a supervisee’ reflects a hierarchical perspective of supervision but despite this the supervisee’s feelings are considered by the supervisor, contributing to equalising the relationship. It also involves supervisors being aware of their own role in the supervisory relationship. For example, Andrea talks about one of her supervisors being aware of ‘taking space’ in sessions, but invited supervisees to challenge them regarding this (App. D: L126-133). Bella spoke of one supervisor who invited discussion about the supervisory relationship, which she saw as taking responsibility for, and being open to, their own part in this relationship (App. E: L138-140).

Somewhat paradoxically, power was sometimes constructed as involving a blurring of boundaries, while its absence was constructed as part of supervisors being less formal. For example, Andrea states that one of her supervisors was a “real mumsy lady...supervision in her house...was like really cosy...it didn’t feel at all like supervision...I always felt comfortable to bring anything and we would talk about everything” (App. D: L316-318 & L321-322). In this instance the participant feels unrestricted in what they can talk about but constructs this as difficult to associate with supervision, almost as if the presence of power is an element of supervision for this participant. A number of participants talk of power being decreased through stepping outside of supervisory roles, appealing to their shared humanness instead. For example, Glenda says “the way that the balance of power sorted itself out was by very honest communication...it for me was about dissolving those projections that everyone had...we were just three human beings in a room” (App. I: L56-57 & L66-71). Connie similarly appears to define an egalitarian supervisory relationship as one where it is “a person to person thing where we both explore and we try to help the

client and ourselves to develop you know” (App. F: L121-122). The implication here is that rather than being a hierarchical relationship where the supervisee is learning from the supervisor, both are developing together.

These constructions of supervision drawing on a professional discourse and human relationship discourse would appear to open up possibilities for participants’ subjectivities that are more assertive, resisting the compliant subject position offered by constructions dominated by expert discourse. This is not to say that these constructions are straightforward or necessarily offering resistance to occur, as can be seen within extract 12 where Connie still remains unassertive. Due to participants orientating themselves to power in supervision in an explicit way, and thus often constructing power as negative, instances of resistance through tactical reversal can be more easily seen. However, I would argue that the construction ‘supervision as human relationship’ may be viewed as an example of resistance as self-formation. Whilst ‘supervision as protection for clients’ enabled the participant Eve to resist being compliant and submissive to her supervisor’s expertise, her subjectivity still consisted of supervisor as knowledgeable and her less so. Supervision as human relationship allows a new subjectivity outside of this knowledge continuum but not necessarily in conflict with it.

Analysis Summary:

The analysis of the data showed supervision as the discursive object to be constructed in the participants’ talk in a number of ways. Supervision was constructed as learning, as assessment or test and as insight. Examining each of these constructions, expert and psychodynamic discourses were identified as involved in these constructions. The

effects of the deployment of these discourses were the establishment and maintenance of supervision as a hierarchical relationship. Exploring the implications for practice showed participants as compliant and submissive within the supervisory relationship, in terms of not disagreeing with the supervisor or not contributing much to the interaction. Within such a hierarchical relationship supervisors could adopt an authoritarian subject position, and this was highlighted in constructions of power in supervision, where supervisors dictated what was spoken about and what was taken as the correct or right meaning of clinical work. The impact of these constructions of supervision as hierarchical relationship, in which power could be constructed as supervisors adopting an authoritarian subject position, for trainee subjectivity included trainees feeling intimidated, frustrated and unpleasant. However, consistent with Foucault's view of power as being enabling and productive rather than just negative or restrictive, was evidence in participants' accounts of supervision as hierarchical enabling trainees to avoid responsibility and power as domination, and to make mistakes. Interestingly, taking gender into account seemed to have an affect on constructions of supervision as hierarchical. For example, some of the trainees constructed their female supervisors needing to adopt an authoritarian position as a consequence of rivalry or competitiveness due to them both being women. In these accounts there was an absence of notions of competitiveness with male supervisors. In contrast to constructions that led to supervision as hierarchical, there were alternative constructions in trainees' accounts that afforded resistance to the above constructions enabling participants to form themselves as more equal within supervision. These were supervision as human relationship and as for the protection of clients. These afforded the possibility for more active subject positions for trainees that enabled resistance to hierarchical supervisory experiences and for meaning (i.e. knowledge)

within the supervision interaction to be co-created. It is not being suggested that within supervision as hierarchical supervisees were powerless, as they often invested themselves in this dynamic as a kind of protection against responsibility for clients or to try and avoid dominating forms of power.

DISCUSSION

Introduction:

The purpose of the discussion section of a piece of research is to review and evaluate the analysis in addressing the topic of interest, highlighting clearly what was found from the analysis and what the implications are for theory and practice. This is not an uncomplicated or straightforward task for social constructionist research. Discourse analysis, a social constructionist methodology, has been argued to be a craft like process that is hard to specify (Potter, 1988) and Harper, O'Connor, Self and Stevens (2008, p.199) state that "confusion, analytic paralysis and losing sight of one's research question are all normal experiences for novices" using this approach.

McLeod (2001, p.103) points out that the reluctance of discourse analysts to specify their method "makes it difficult to know whether they are, in fact, carrying out work that is distinctly different from other qualitative traditions". Whilst the researcher of this study certainly at times struggled with how to conduct the analysis adequately from a discursive perspective to avoid the ambiguity McLeod alludes to, what follows is an attempt to review and present what may be usefully gleaned from the analysis undertaken in relation to the topic of interest from a discursive standpoint.

The intention of this study was to critique supervision as a taken for granted institutional practice in the counselling psychology context. This was undertaken by drawing on poststructuralist ideas to conceptualise supervision as a historically and culturally specific social construction in which the possible meanings constructed within and about it are dependent on the discursive resources available to speakers. Doing so moved away from viewing supervision from a modernist perspective, in which it is presumed that there is 'truth' that can be unproblematically transmitted

from those supposedly in possession of such truth or knowledge to those that aren't, to one where the discourses of supervision are implicated in technologies of the self regulating supervisees' subjectivity and conduct. As the central concern was to explore power in supervision, Foucauldian discourse analysis was utilised to identify the discourses shaping participants subjectivity and practice as supervisees and as women counselling psychologists in training. The following discussion will attempt to critically evaluate the extent to which this was achieved, and whether the chosen method was appropriate to this end. Given Kasket and Gil-Rodriguez's (2011) observation that trainee counselling psychology research often neglects explicitly linking its significance to the counselling psychology context, particular attention will be paid to the interaction of this profession with the constructions and discourses identified. Limitations of the study will be explored along with a discussion of the notion of applicability and what may be seen as potentially useful for counselling psychology from this research.

'Applicability' of Research?:

An important issue that must be engaged with is the notion of the applicability of this research. In traditional, mainstream psychology research it is also the task of this final section to make assertions about its applicability. That is, the generalisability of the findings and concrete recommendations for policy and further research that may follow from them. However, when research assumes a social constructionist position the idea of applicability becomes problematic. Indeed, research utilising discourse analysis has often been reluctant to move beyond deconstructing taken for granted categories and practices to make recommendations for change in social, political and/or psychological practice (Willig, 1998, 1999). Widdicombe (1995), for example,

warns against committing to particular recommendations as to do so risks reifying these, imposing categories of meaning upon others rather than adhering to contextualised analysis. This in effect means deconstructing one discourse only to replace it with another. Moreover, Harper (1999) questions the use of the term ‘application’ arguing that it implies a division between theory and practice whereby ideas from research can be taken out of context and applied to a context of practice unproblematically. In addition to these reification and ideology of application critiques, it is argued research findings can be abused in the pursuit of political and / or economic objectives by powerful groups (Willig, 1999). As a consequence of these objections to the notion of application, Harper (1999, p.128) prefers the term ‘usefulness’ as more appropriate for social constructionist research, referring to “whether a particular idea or intervention leads to richer understanding and to just and socially responsible outcomes”.

The current study, working within social constructionist assumptions, adopts this notion of usefulness in evaluating its relevance. That is, rather than pretending that this is the only and most truthful reading of the data that could then be applied universally, the researcher acknowledges that the discursive resources identified are based on this particular sample, could have been read in other ways and does not assume they can be applied to all women counselling psychologists in training. Rather, it is hoped this study may contribute to debate around supervision and its shaping effects and consequently be useful in enhancing the reader’s (potentially trainee counselling psychologists and their supervisors) and counselling psychology’s reflexive research and practice. However, it is not being suggested that the idea of application or moving beyond deconstruction be abandoned altogether. As Willig

(1999b, p.39) states, “a social constructionist perspective need not necessarily entail relativism”, with its paralysing effect on taking any political action. Which discursive objects are deconstructed through discourse analytic research is inevitably a political choice requiring grounding, and “any contribution to a body of knowledge is always also a recommendation about how things should or should not be done” (Willig, 1998, p.94). So, to clarify, it is not being argued that application is impossible, making research such as this worthless or redundant. Rather, because of the epistemological position this study is taking, where language is seen as constitutive or performative, any notion of findings being applied to make recommendations must be considered critically and reflexively. As a possible way forward regarding this, Willig (1999) has outlined three forms discourse analysis can take that may enable those who wish to address social and political practice and engage with application. These are discourse analysis as social critique, as empowerment and as guide to reform. As social critique discourse analysis is concerned with problematising language and its consequences through exposing the discursive processes by which certain ‘truths’ and categories are legitimated and perpetuated. Its method of intervention is exposure through publication, so that the reader is then able to resist and challenge dominant discursive constructions, although how such resistance is to take place in practice is not usually elaborated on. Discourse analysis as empowerment seeks to move beyond deconstructing dominant discourses to identifying counter-discourses so that subversive discursive practices and areas of resistance are promoted. For example, Parker (et. al, 1995) in addition to deconstructing discourses and practices of psychopathology, identify alternative forms of mental health practice such as deconstructive therapy and the Hearing Voices Network. An outline of the findings of this study, and how they may be viewed as offering the possibility for social critique

and empowerment in the area of counselling psychology supervision, will be provided. Before doing so, however, it is necessary to expand the analysis in order to make some account for the extra-discursive, as dictated by the study's critical realist position outlined in the introduction, and gendered aspects of the findings.

Analysis expanded - The extra-discursive conditions for discourses identified:

A description of the discourses available for women counselling psychology trainees and the various ways in which they were deployed, and with what consequences for subjectivity and practice, has been given above. However, Willig (1999b) says that non-relativist social constructionist research must also analyse the conditions (historical, social and economic) that made possible the subjective accounts and the discourses which constitute them. An exploration of the historicity of counselling psychology supervision discourses was beyond the scope of this research, the reasons for which will be elaborated on in the methodological critique that will follow shortly. However, it is possible to explore links between the discourses identified and materiality or the extra-discursive within the data. Extending the analysis in the discussion in this way is not unusual in discourse analytic research (Parker, 1994). Analysing power in supervision necessitates retaining some notion of materiality, as Hook (2001, p.538) states, the “discursive effects of the material, and the material effects of the discursive” both need to be considered in analysing power. Taking up a critical realist position in this way is not to be viewed as being in conflict with poststructuralism as espoused by Foucault. Although he argued for a critique of knowledge and ‘truth’ Foucault did not adhere to an absolute relativism where a reality outside discursive practice does not exist or at least cannot be accessed directly – a position adhered to by micro social constructionists who utilise discursive

psychology. For example, Hook (2001, p.529-530) in his careful reading of Foucault's *The Order of Discourse* (1981) criticises "much of discourse analysis...[as] critical linguistic practices that, within the context of their analyses, focus on power as a function of the text alone...[Foucault argues] such forms of analysis attribute undue power to the internal properties/structure of language [because]....the power in language links to, and stems from, external, material, and tactical forms of power". Relatedly, Hook (2001, p.) surmises from Foucault that "material conditions of possibility...[such as] institutions, social structures and practices [sic] limit and constrict the free flow of discourse, [sic] both reinforce and renew it, and as such they need to take their rightful places within a thorough analysis of the power of discursive practices". Although already alluded to above a number of thinkers have explicated what might constitute the extra-discursive. For example, Parker (1992) lists direct physical coercion, the habitual and physical orientation of the individual to different kinds of discourses and the physical orientation of space, while Nightingale and Cromby (1999) refer to embodiment, the physical nature of objects in the world and the power of institutions. It is the latter authors' reference to institutions that most relates to the current study, which has focused on supervision as an institutional practice. It is important to emphasise that proponents of a critical realist or macro social constructionist position (e.g. Willig, 1999; Nightingale & Cromby, 1999) are not suggesting that social and physical conditions determine the emergence of discourses, but that they provide the *possibility* for them to take hold. Indeed, to claim anything more than this would be to betray social constructionism and falling back into positivism. The work of Guilfoyle (2002) exploring power in therapy is helpful for this purpose of engaging with materiality in the current study. He argues, in referring to therapy's material dimensions, that it is as much a place as a

practice, stating that due to the “dispersion of psychological awareness and therapeutic language in the lay community (Rose, 1989), people recognise that there are ‘places’ ...for those who are dissatisfied with some...aspect of their life [which are] marked as sites in which expertise can be found” (Guilfoyle, 2002, p.85). Similarly, this research asserts that people, being trainees or not, are aware of supervision as sites in which expertise is provided by the supervisor. This idea of place being important for such sites is evident in some of the participants’ accounts. For example, Andrea seems to describe a tension between where one of her supervision sessions took place (i.e. the supervisor’s home) and her assumption that supervision takes place in a formal setting– “supervision in her house...was like really cosy...it didn’t feel like supervision at all” (App. D: L316-318). Not that this idea can’t be contradicted, as is reflected when she says “I always felt that I got exactly what I need” (App. D: L321). Another example of the materiality of supervision as institutional practice can be seen in the participant Glenda describing having difficulties with one of her supervisors. Outside of the context of supervision and before having started her training she says she would have explained it as a ‘personality clash’, but being located in the supervision setting she constructed it in the terms of the knowledge connected to this setting – that is, as dynamics and ‘projections’. This example also shows how the discourses institutions reinforce are internalised by individuals to regulate themselves - “could I have seen it another way, I don’t really know because it’s become part of the way I think now” (App. I: L241-242). Guilfoyle (2002) argues that material administrative ‘objects’ such as qualification certificates make the therapist’s expertise visible; enabling or legitimising them to freely question and interpret the client’s personal experiences in a way that he suggests would not happen outside of the therapy context, away from

these objects. This may equally be seen in supervision via supervisor's reports. For example, a supervisor of the participant Eve, when questioned about including the fact Eve had suffered a personal bereavement in a report, replies "nothing is confidential in supervision" (App. H: L241-242).

The above has expanded the scope of the study's analysis by examining instances within participants' accounts that referred to material conditions, such as the place or location where supervision occurs and objects (e.g. supervisor reports), and found that they both reinforced and were reinforced by expert discourse in supervision. Doing so was an attempt by the researcher to adhere to a critical realist and FDA position of including the extra discursive in exploring power within discursive practices.

However, there is an argument as to whether this was achieved given that the accounts of the extra discursive examined were exactly that – 'accounts'. That is, although extra discursive conditions were seemingly identified within participants' talk that appeared to effect the enabling or inhibiting of discourses, the current study did not corroborate the 'existence' of these material conditions through collection of non discursive data. This was achieved by Sims-Schouten (et.al, 2007) in their development of a critical realist approach to discourse analysis which involved "an examination of government policy and the genealogy of knowledge that enabled these policies; and a study of the participants' social and physical environment". This study is not alone in being open to this criticism, with Hook (2001, p.525-526) pointing out Parker (1992)'s form of discourse analysis similarly fails to move beyond textual analysis, with "what counts as knowledge...not traced back far enough to *the material conditions of possibility [italics in original]*, to the multiple institutional supports and various social structures and practices underlying the production of truth". However,

claims to the extra-discursive are only being made very tentatively, and should in no way be interpreted as making naive essentialist claims.

Another aspect of the findings needing expansion relates to gender. Analysis of the data showed that trainees constructed gender as part of hierarchical supervision but in complicated ways. That is, all of them referred to both men and women supervisors adopting authoritarian subject positions, but in the case of women supervisors a number of trainees spoke of 'rivalry' and 'competitiveness' as part of it. It appeared that with women supervisors trainees constructed power and meaning in supervision as 'up for grabs' but this was absent when speaking of supervision with men. A way of understanding this, and being consistent with the study's social constructionist framework, is to view gender not as having fixed, determined characteristics as a modernist perspective would (e.g. Ounsted & Taylor, 1972), but as negotiated or done in interaction based on available gender discourses (Weatherall, 2002). So, in relation to the above findings, the trainees may be enacting notions of gender differences whereby the 'expertise' of their male supervisors is not up for questioning whereas that of their female supervisors is. It can be argued that by acting as if expertise is a fixed characteristic of male supervisors, the trainees were reinforcing gender identity and obscuring power relations unfavourable to women in the process.

Findings of the study and their relevance to supervision theory & practice:

In relation to the current study, the analysis can be read as social critique as a result of having identified (deconstructed) the implications of different discursive constructions of supervision on women counselling psychology trainees' possibilities for action and subjectivity in supervision. Specifically, constructions of supervision as learning, test

and insight shaped by expert, developmental and gender discourses were shown to have implications for how the trainees interviewed could act within and experience supervision. These implications were not straightforward, however, showing supervision discourses to be complex and contradictory in their effects. For example, the hierarchical supervisory relationship informed by the above discourses had both positive and negative, enabling and restrictive consequences for women counselling psychology trainees' within their accounts, such as being able to avoid responsibility and make mistakes legitimately but also having less input in the creation of meaning in the supervision process. This finding would appear to be consistent with Murphy and Wright (2005) who found power in supervision could be both oppressive through limiting self-disclosure but also positive, with supervisees experiencing power in supervision as contributing to their development as therapists. It is important to note that Murphy and Wright's study did not explicitly draw on Foucauldian notions of power to interpret their findings but they would appear to support them nonetheless, as does this research. This study may also be read as empowerment, having identified alternative discourses, such as 'professional' and 'human relationship' discourses, that offered alternative positionings or resistance to hierarchical power relations in supervision for the women trainees interviewed. Again, this was highlighted to be complex, with participants not always taking up these alternative discourses in such a way as to transform or resist the hierarchy of the supervision relationship. Some have suggested that psychoanalytic theory, particularly that developed by Lacan, can be drawn on as one way of accounting for these apparent contradictions (Burr, 2003), although utilising psychoanalysis within social constructionist research is argued to present a risk of falling into essentialism.

The current study through its deconstructive analysis may be seen as adding to the work of Crocket (2007) - who analysed the talk in one supervision interaction to show how supervision culture is implicated in supervisee's self-regulation – by examining the shaping effects of discourses in the counselling psychology context (from trainees' talk in interviews). This is seen as important, as counselling psychology has been argued to be a distinct profession with its own epistemological foundations (Spinelli, 2001; Williams & Irving, 1996). Indeed, the findings of this study suggested that the conflicting paradigms informing counselling psychology posed difficulties for some trainees interviewed, in terms of how this impacted on the expert discourse involved in their talk of supervision. For example, within Andrea's account the level of qualification required to be a counselling psychologist seemed to offer the opportunity to resist the authority of supervisors as experts. However, counselling psychology's valuing of pluralism seemed to undermine this, as she was not able to adopt a position of certainty that her supervisors who firmly worked from one therapeutic approach (non counselling psychologists), could do. A conclusion that could be drawn from this is that more effort should be made towards facilitating counselling psychology trainees accessing supervision from counselling psychologists, as a way of reducing this epistemological tension. However, the reality for counselling psychologists once qualified is to work in diverse settings that pose similar epistemological tensions for counselling psychology identity.

A finding that should be revisited for its significance to counselling psychology is the identification within participant accounts of supervision constructed as human relationship. This construction enabled the participant Glenda's subjectivity to be formed as 'a human being' rather than 'a less knowledgeable, trainee and woman',

offering a point of resistance. Equally interesting is the obvious parallels with counselling psychology's emphasis on, and research into, the relational as fundamental to the therapeutic process (and supervisory process!). Whilst acknowledging the productive power of supervision as hierarchical relationship, it seems reasonable for counselling psychologists within supervision to emphasise this process as being a human relationship as much as an exchange of knowledge. To do so could promote the knowledge exchange being mutual and co-constructed.

In addition to the above, the findings of this study can be viewed as contributing to filling a gap in the research literature regarding social constructionist explorations of gender constructions in the counselling psychology supervision context. They highlight the ways gender identity may be constructed in supervision which risk reinforcing gendered power relations.

Reflexivity Appraised:

Reflexivity in qualitative research is vitally important, particularly in social constructionist research - an approach that recognises that knowledge claims, including those made from research, are "ideological, political and permeated with values" (Schwandt, 2000, p.98; cited in Frost et al, 2010, p.444). Furthermore, it has been argued that "qualitative research is *as* useful as the reflexive nature of the researcher regarding his/her influence on data production and analysis" (Broom, Hand & Tovey, 2009, p.52), and Steier (1991) goes as far as to argue that research only becomes social constructionist when reflexivity is taken seriously. This study has attempted to centralise this process of reflexivity through outlining the researcher's interest in the topic and including reflexive commentaries designed to explicate the

researcher's influence on data collection and analysis. This may be seen as addressing personal reflexivity and functional reflexivity (Tindall, 1994). To what extent such reflexive strategies have been successful in firmly situating the researcher in the research process (Cooper & Burnett, 2006; cited in Alex & Hammarstrum, 2008) is difficult for the researcher to assess due to continuing to be emerged within it. That is, some have argued that understanding what shapes the research (reflexivity) may only become apparent after completing it (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003).

Nevertheless, as part of a continued engagement with reflexivity, how the social location or positioning of the counselling psychology trainees interviewed and that of the researcher influenced the research process require deeper consideration (Buckner, 2005). Specifically, given that all participants were women and the researcher was a man, what was the impact of this on the narratives produced during the interviews, and on how the data was analysed? As in all human interactions, power is always present in the transaction of an interview (Numkoosing, 2005; cited in Alex & Hammarstrum, 2008, p.170), but what bearing did gender and the shared status between researcher and researched as counselling psychology trainees have on exacerbating or minimising power relations? It is possible that the researcher also being a counselling psychology trainee may have enabled participants to talk more freely of their experiences of power in supervision than if the researcher was a supervisor. Regarding the situation of the researcher being a man interviewing women, it has been argued by some early feminist writers to be problematic, based on the assertion that women are more able than men to access the experiences of women in interviews (Broom et. al, 2009). However, contemporary feminist researchers have criticised such assertions as simplistic, and it has been pointed out that little research

has been done on the effects of gender incongruence (Broom et. al, 2009), except for some studies focusing on women interviewing men (e.g Arendell, 1997). Given that all the participants were women, it was particularly necessary for an engagement with this issue of the influence of gender on the findings. This will be attempted through reflecting on its possible impact in an interview with one of the participants, as an example. One of the participants, Diane, spoke explicitly of power in supervision related to a male supervisor who had attempted to establish a dual relationship (i.e. romantic/sexual) with her and when she refused this had become unsupportive in the supervisory relationship. She then described how this had led to her not choosing men as supervisors, unless she perceived them to be homosexual, to avoid feeling threatened. I was conscious in this context about how my gender may have been affecting what and how this participant spoke, and raised this with her to acknowledge the potential power within this dynamic –

Diane: “I’m having a real problem with males and um yeah males in positions of power

INT: I guess I’m conscious of in this

Diane: Yeah

INT: in this role as well

Diane: Yeah that’s true. (App. G: L116-121)

INT: It does sound like a very difficult experience especially in your first year...so

I’m aware of for me treating you with respect...and to tread carefully. (App. G: L282-287)

Listening to the recorded interview and reading the transcript it seemed that difficulties in communication occurred more with Diane than with other participants, shown through her frequently clarifying if she had understood my questions correctly. This may have shown the difficulties of talking about a sensitive topic with a male interviewer, but there was some indication that the interview situation offered a more powerful subject position to Diane in relation to discourses involving men as threatening:

INT: How are you feeling in talking about this?

Diane:...I think it's good to talk about it. I think that's one reason why I wanted to take part in the study because I felt like in some ways it could empower me, be more therapeutic. (App. G: L367-373).

It seemed that within Diane's account were discourses around heterosexual men as threatening and homosexual men as non-threatening which affected her subjectivity (she described feeling more herself around supervisors who were women or men perceived as homosexual) and practice (she had avoided working with male supervisors).

Another important aspect of the data that requires consideration is the fact that all respondents volunteering to participate were women and that the topic discussed by them often oriented to power explicitly even before it had been introduced by the researcher. At the recruitment stage the researcher presumed that this skewed composition of the sample in relation to gender was simply representative of the demographic make up of counselling psychology trainees. However, it is possible that

the nature of the research, and specifically, female trainees' experience of power, could be implicated in the sample composition. As Sankar and Gubrium (1994, xv; cited in Arendell, 1997, p.344) state, "participants agree to engage in an interview for their own reasons". The title of the study was intended to reflect the study's focus on how being labelled 'trainee' afforded participants certain rights to speak and act due to the discourses surrounding the notion of trainee and supervision.

However, the explicit naming of power in the title and in other materials (e.g. participant information form) appeared to orient participants to speak of their experiences of overt power (i.e. leading closely to power as domination) rather than speaking of their experiences of supervision generally, within which the discourses implicated in less visible, disciplinary power could be identified. The reason for such explicitness was twofold. Firstly, due to inexperience in carrying out discourse analytic research the researcher was uncertain whether instances of power would be present in the interviews and subsequent data if not explicitly enquired about. Secondly, there were concerns that not stating the focus of the study, i.e. an exploration of power in supervision as a critique of this institutional practice, would be misleading to participants and therefore ethically suspect. However, in relation to the first point, such uncertainty perhaps belied the researcher holding modernist assumptions about power in the early stages of the research process. In particular, that power is visible, is oppressive and is possessed by individuals. Despite this, it is felt that the data was not compromised as supervision discourses that shaped participants' subjectivity and practice (i.e. power relations) were still able to be identified. The fact that all participants were women means that the shaping effects of the discourses

within supervision involved a complex relationship between participants being positioned both as trainees *and* as women.

Methodological Critique:

Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine (2008) outline that Foucauldian discourse analysis should include three dimensions of analysis of discursive practices - historical inquiry (genealogy), mechanisms of power and description of their functioning, and the material/signifying practices in which subjects are made up (subjectification).

Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine (2008) go on to say that to adequately address the historical dimension of analysis, a text containing a sample of discourses should include discourses that are historically variable, to show how a subject, in this case, supervision, has been spoken about differently at different times and exposed to varied forms of regulation, punishment and reform. This study interviewed counselling psychology trainees over six months and did not include other forms of text relating to counselling psychology supervision from other time periods.

Therefore, this may be considered a possible limitation of the current study for not theorising “fluctuations and transformations in discursive relations to ward off a reading of them as unchanging” (Parker & Burman, 1993, p.164). Future research could look at counselling psychology texts at different time periods, although the extent to which this could be achieved is limited given that counselling psychology is relatively young (Milton, 2010).

There has been much debate regarding the relativist/ realist distinction within social constructionist thinking and research, with some authors vehemently defending their adopted position as better or more appropriate (e.g. Nightingale & Cromby, 1999;

Parker, 1998). In this study it was due to an understanding of discursive psychology to view power as little more than an effect of discourse during social interaction that FDA was chosen as more appropriate for the study's interest in power relations in supervision. However, Burr (2003, p.174) states that a criticism made of FDA is that by "turning discourses into objects, which have an existence independent of the people who use them and the contexts in which they are used...neglects what the speaker is doing with their talk". Furthermore, there are some who argue that the polarising effect of the relativist/realist debate is unhelpful and that there is some compatibility between these positions. Therefore, it is possible that researching the topic of power in supervision could have benefited from employing a research methodology, such as critical discursive psychology, that incorporates both positions. This would be in line with counselling psychology's valuing of pluralism both in therapeutic approaches *and* research methodology. Equally, also exploring the topic from another approach such as interpretative phenomenological analysis would have added another view to the analysis. Combining FDA and IPA in research has been undertaken before (e.g. Johnson, Burrows & Williamson, 2004) based on suggested connections between them on pragmatic grounds (Smith, 1996; Yardley, 1997; cited in Johnson et. al 2004). Johnson (et. al, 2004) also argue that there are epistemological and ontological connections between the two that could support them both being used in the same study.

Another possible limitation is outlined by Willig and Drury (2004) who point out that when discourse analysis is used as a research methodology within the context of academic research, it can position the researcher as expert by presupposing a 'division of labour' whereby the 'participant' produces the data while the 'researcher' points to

the discursive constructions' functions and contradictions. This can be an undermining experience for participants, leading to what these authors call 'relational violence' which they argue cannot be avoided within the academic framework. Willig (1999b) suggests collective discourse analysis, where participants are seen as co-researchers and are involved in each stage of the analysis, can address this, so that the research is not 'about' but rather 'for' its participants, a form of action research.

However, Georgaca and Avidi (2012, p.150) argue that because discourse analysis works from the assumption that individuals are both positioned by discourses (but are not fully aware of this) and use them (but not intentionally necessarily); it does not make sense to pursue participant validation. Giles (2002) points out that while it is held to be good practice in some forms of qualitative research for the researcher to allow the participants to inspect the data and the analysis (to promote reliability and empowerment respectively), doing so for some topics using discourse analysis can jeopardise the whole project.

Conclusions & Future Research:

The current study sought to question supervision in the counselling psychology context as a taken-for-granted institutional practice by identifying the discourses implicated in shaping women counselling psychology trainees' subjectivity and practice. The current study found that expert, developmental and gender discourses were implicated in trainees' constructions of supervision and power in supervision. These had both enabling and inhibiting effects, positioning women trainees as submissive and compliant within a hierarchical relationship with supervisors. It was also found that alternative discourses, such as professional and human relationship

discourses, were contained within the accounts that offered resistance to the hierarchical supervisory relationship. This study also found that there were material conditions referred to in participants' talk that reinforced and were reinforced by these discourses - particularly expert discourse - such as supervisor's reports and the institutional practice of supervision taking place in certain physical spaces. This consideration of materiality in relation to discourses should be viewed as going further than Crockett's (2007) study, which did not explicitly explore this. However, it must be said that this exploration of the extra-discursive is only tentative.

Considering the above, a number of possibilities for further research present themselves. This study explored constructions of power through the accounts of women counselling psychology trainees. Future research may wish to study the accounts of supervisors of trainee counselling psychologists, to bring in further voices. It may also be valuable to interview men counselling psychology trainees to explore the ways they construct their identity within supervision. Finally, future research would benefit from more confidently exploring the extra-discursive beyond references in participant accounts, although this is not an easy task.

This study can be seen as social critique through the deconstruction of the shaping effects of counselling psychology supervision. It is important to emphasise that 'deconstructing' as social critique does not mean turning away from or rejecting theoretical models over others in supervision or indeed from supervision itself - this would mean closing down possibilities, inadvertently adopting the polarised duality of modernism that deconstruction is attempting to move beyond (House, 1999). That is, not to wrongly interpret deconstructing as meaning that the supervisor should disown

any expertise or authority. Rather it highlights to the supervisor the need to be reflexive; to not abandon knowledge but question how knowledge they espouse can affect the meanings created within the supervisory relationship and technologies of the self that regulate supervisees. Equally, it is not being suggested from this study's deconstruction of supervision that supervisees should reject the knowledge and advice of their supervisors, nor swallow whole everything that is offered from them.

However, it does offer the opportunity for empowerment through enabling supervisees to be reflexive themselves and to bring their own contribution to the meanings created in supervision. Both supervisors and supervisees would benefit from being aware of Rose's (1989, cited in Allwood, 1996, p.19) argument that "experts, as mediators between the State and the individual, use their expertise to educate the individual into a self-critical and self-regulatory mode of being...through the establishment of 'facts', [and] the inducement of personal anxiety about the deviation from social 'norms'". Philp, Guy & Lowe (2007, p.55) in their discussion of supervision as social construction stress the importance of stepping back from any particular discourse - social constructionist views included - in what they call 'meta-positioning' in order to be positioned in supervision as a "contributor to a conversation from which ideas from any and all models [and from both both supervisors and counselling psychology trainees] might have the potential to add richness to the dialogue", so that there is an "emphasis on meaning that is co-constructed through dialogue, and a view of the supervisory relationship as collaborative rather than hierarchical" (Copeland, et.al, 2011, p.28). Such a view of supervision would fit well with counselling psychology, which increasingly values a two person psychology where the meaning created in therapy (and supervision!) is seen as an intersubjective, co-constructed process (Auerbach & Blatt, 2001; Rizq,

2005). Exploring supervision from a social constructionist perspective has received little attention in counselling psychology and it is hoped that this study has stimulated interest in researching this area further.

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APPENDIX A



Participant information sheet

Title of Research Project:

An Exploration of Trainee Counselling Psychologists' Accounts of Power in Clinical Supervision

Thank you for expressing an interest in participating in this research. If you do decide to participate in this study the following information will inform you of what the process will involve. My name is Nick Dobson and I am conducting this research as part of my counselling psychology doctorate at Roehampton University. Should you have any further questions after reading the below do not hesitate to contact me.

Brief description of the Research:

Clinical supervision is viewed by many to be fundamentally important in ensuring professional development of counselling psychologists and the welfare of clients, while others dispute this. Power has been argued to exist in supervision for reasons such as a hierarchical quality of this relationship, and to have varied meanings. This study is designed to explore trainee counselling psychologists' experience of power in clinical supervision, and how this may have informed, and been informed by, being a trainee counselling psychologist. Other than exploring and reflecting on your experiences of power in supervision, there may not be any direct or immediate benefits of taking part in this study. However, it is expected you would be contributing to the counselling psychology professions' understanding of trainees' experiences of power in supervision and potentially informing the development of supervision as a result.

To participate in this study you must be a trainee counselling psychologist in your penultimate or ultimate year of your course, and have experienced power in your clinical supervision, whether it is individual or group supervision. After you have been given the opportunity to assess what participation in this study will involve, i.e., by reading through this information sheet, you will be asked to sign a consent form if you choose to participate, but you will be free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. Should you withdraw you can do so by citing the ID number provided on the debriefing form. If you withdraw data in an aggregate form may still be used/published.

What will be expected from you as a research participant?

This is a qualitative study and participation in it will involve a face-to-face interview, which will last approximately 1.5 hours (which will include a brief introduction and time after the interview for discussing your experience of taking part in the study and

any questions you may have) at a location convenient to you (i.e. a private interview room at your training institution or that of the researcher). The interview will be audio-recorded, to be later transcribed and analysed using a qualitative research method, e.g. FDA, IPA.

How will your confidentiality and anonymity be maintained and if difficulties from participating arise, how will they be handled?

The interview is intended to take place in an appropriately private location minimising interruptions. Your anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained through the following measures. Any identifying details (e.g. names) will be either changed or removed from both the audio recording and transcript, which will be kept separately from any identifiable information, such as your contact details and consent form and will be identified by an ID number. All audio recordings, transcripts and identifiable information will be stored securely, either on a password protected computer or lockable cabinet of the researcher, for a period of 10 years. Only the researcher, supervisors, assessors, and potentially publishers will have access to the audio recording and transcript. Anonymised quotes will be included in the thesis and any publications that arise from it.

Your anonymity and confidentiality will be upheld provided the information you provide falls within the British Psychological Society's ethical guidelines. Please be advised that should details of unethical or unprofessional practice emerge during the interview the researcher has an ethical duty to report this to the BPS.

It is important for you to be aware that during and after the interview you may find that talking about your experiences of supervision raises uncomfortable or upsetting feelings and issues for you. There will be an opportunity at the end of the interview to talk briefly with me about this, and a debriefing sheet will be provided to you giving details of appropriate support should you like to discuss what has been raised for you in greater depth.

If you decide to participate in this study, or have any further questions, please contact me via email or telephone, as outlined below, to arrange where and when to meet for the interview. Before the interview commences you will be provided with a consent form to read and sign.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

Best wishes,

Nick Dobson

Researcher contact details:

Nick Dobson
Trainee Counselling Psychologist
Department of Psychology
Roehampton University
Whitelands College
Holybourne Avenue
London
SW15 4JD
Email: dobsonn@roehampton.ac.uk
Telephone number: 0778811 3933

This research has been approved by the Ethics Committee at Roehampton University. If you have a concern about any aspect of your participation or any other queries please raise this with the researcher. However if you would like to contact an independent party please contact the Head of Department (of if the researcher is a student you can also contact the Director of Studies).

Director of Studies:

Dr Janek Dubowski
Department of Psychology
Roehampton University
Whitelands College
Holybourne Avenue
London, SW15 4JD
Email: j.dubowski@roehampton.ac.uk
Telephone number: 020 8392 3124
8392 3627

Head of Department:

Dr Diane Bray
Department of Psychology
Roehampton University
Whitelands College
Holybourne Avenue
London, SW15 4JD
Email: d.bray@roehampton.ac.uk
Telephone number: 020

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of Research:

An Exploration of Trainee Counselling Psychologists' Accounts of Power in Clinical Supervision

Description of project:

This study will explore trainee counselling psychologists' experiences of power in clinical supervision, and what the impact of this may have had on their identity as counselling psychologists.

Eight to twelve participants will be sought to attend an interview to discuss a series of questions and this will last for 1.5 hours. Interviews will take place at a mutually agreed location (interview room of participant or researcher's training institution) and convenient time.

It is required that you sign this form prior to the start of the interview; by signing this form you are confirming that the following procedures were undertaken to prepare you for the interview.

I confirm that the following information was provided by the Researcher:

- I have been given the information sheet which informs me what the research will involve.
- I am aware that I have the right to stop participating in the study at any point and to withdraw without giving a reason.
- I am aware that if I do decide to withdraw from the study that data may still be used or published as anonymised quotes.
- The only people who will be permitted to hear this recording are the Researcher, his supervisors and possibly examiners.
- I am aware that every effort will be made to ensure that anonymity is achieved in the transcript of this interview.

- I am aware that every effort will be made to ensure anonymity should this research be published.
- I have been informed of the British Psychological Society's ethical guidelines and am aware of the limits of confidentiality.

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Print name: _____

Researchers name: _____

Researchers details:

Nick Dobson
 Trainee Counselling Psychologist
 Department of Psychology
 Roehampton University
 Whitelands College
 Holybourne Avenue
 London, SW15 4JD
 Email address: dobsonn@roehampton.ac.uk
 Contact telephone number: 0778811 3933

This research has been approved by the Ethics Committee at Roehampton Univeristy.
 If you have a concern about any aspect of your participation or any other queries please raise this with the researcher. However if you would like to contact an independent party please contact the Head of Department (or if the researcher is a student you can also contact the Director of Studies).

Director of Studies:

Head of Department:

Dr Janek Dubowski

Dr Diane Bray

Department of Psychology

Department of Psychology

Roehampton University

Roehampton University

Whitelands College

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Holybourne Avenue

Holybourne Avenue

London, SW15 4JD

London, SW15 4JD

Email: j.dubowski@roehampton.ac.uk

Email: d.bray@roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone number: 020 8392 3214

Telephone number: 020 8392 3627

DEBRIEFING INFORMATION FORM

Title of Research:

An Exploration of Trainee Counselling Psychologists' Accounts of Power in Clinical Supervision

Debrief:

Thank you for your time and participation in my research. This study aims to explore trainee counselling psychologists' experience of power in clinical supervision in order to more fully understand supervision and the implications of power within it on the identities of trainee counselling psychologists. Such an exploration may contribute to and benefit counselling psychology.

I would like to invite you to ask any questions you may have about this project and your involvement in it. In particular, please feel free to talk about your experience of this interview, should you be aware of any difficulties this has raised for you. I would like to remind you that you have the right to withdraw from this study at any point, and you can inform me if this is the case on the details listed below. Should you do so, data in an aggregate form may still be used/ published.

Should you wish to discuss in greater depth, and gain support for, any issues that arose for you, the following are suggestions to access this:

- Student Medical Centre, Froebel College, Roehampton University
0208 392 3679
- Samaritans (24 hours a day): 08457 909090
- For a list of accredited therapists, refer to the following:
 - www.bps.org.uk (T: 0116 254 9568)
 - www.bacp.co.uk (T: 01455 883316)

Researchers details:

Nick Dobson
Trainee Counselling Psychologist
Department of Psychology
Roehampton University
Whitelands College
Holybourne Avenue
London, SW15 4JD
Email address: dobsonn@roehampton.ac.uk
Contact telephone number: 0778811 3933

This research has been approved by the Ethics Committee at Roehampton Univeristy. If you have a concern about any aspect of your participation or any other queries please raise this with the researcher. However if you would like to contact an independent party please contact the Head of Department (of if the researcher is a student you can also contact the Director of Studies).

Director of Studies:

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APPENDIX D

TRANSCRIPT – ‘ANDREA’

1 INT: ok, so to begin with can you describe for me how you have found your experiences
2 of supervision, in your development as a counseling psychologist

3 P: Just generally um yeah its I think generally I've been quite lucky um I think I've um
4 had good supervision with quite different people so I feel like I've got a good sort of
5 experience of very different styles and very different perspectives of how to sort of
6 conduct supervision so that's something that um has been quite good I will say though
7 that a sort of common thread and I(don't know thather this is I've never actually
8 explored this with other people actually but ive found that the supervisors Ive had have
9 been a bit um a bit lax on boundaries so its all been a bit sort of messy whilst the
10 supervision itself has been good the sort of organization structure has been I've found a
11 bit messy and I think at times being in training I've found that a bit destabilising um coz I
12 think very much and certainly thinking about this issue of power coz I think when you're
13 a trainee or I was at least your really clinging too any bits of supervision coz your sort of
14 overwhelmed your with different clients and really kind of valuing that ability to kind of
15 explore what's really going on and um yeah I've found whilst the sort of quality of what I
16 got was always really good and really varied I sometimes struggled with um sort of
17 changing times changing boundaries sort of different people coming late and I found that
18 a bit um destabilising at times I don't know whether that's just my experience or sort of
19 supervisors and train I sometimes wondered that um a lot of the supervisors that I had
20 were trained to a level below what I was aiming to achieve and I don't know at times I
21 felt there may have been awkwardness because of that um but yeah I don't know I know
22 I know whenever it got to about talking about well whats the right way to look at this
23 client coz I never I've never had a counseling psychologist as a the supervisor um and

24 I've often wondered about that dynamic coz it it always seemed yeah I don't know that
25 there was something underlying that wasn't really being spoken about

26 INT: What do you mean?

27 P: Yeah I don't know what I mean actually my mouths opening and words are coming
28 out and I'm kind of realizing some things I haven't really consciously thought about I
29 guess but um what do I mean um I always felt some resistance I guess from supervisors
30 to let me explore what it means as a counseling psychologist to be working with this
31 client it was always made kind of clear like I'm a Jungian or I'm a psychosexual therapist
32 or I'm a person centred or whatever it was um I kind of felt like I had to adopt whatever it
33 was that they were I guess that kind of makes sense coz that's what they're doing but I
34 guess I kind of in retrospect now felt you know there may have been more scope for them
35 to kind of support me more as an individual um you know finding my own way and of
36 course you know making a clear distinction if what they're offering is really useful but its
37 coming from sort of a quite narrow um perspective and I guess supporting my own
38 process to kind of um I guess integrate the different things that we do learn as a
39 counseling psychologist which I think um well everybody seems to be integrative these
40 days I don't know whether it meant or means the same thing from whatever experience
41 they had to what I'm sort of doing and learning perhaps I should have found a counseling
42 psychologist as a supervisor but that just never kind of just never worked out that way

43 INT: Mmm, so sort of it sounds like you're wondering what impact it had or may have
44 had to not have a counseling psychologist supervising you on your find your way

45 P: Yeah coz the other thing is I didn't I've never had a counseling psychologist as a
46 therapist either so I feel um yeah I feel it it is kind of a strange place the therapy world
47 there's so many different nooks and perspectives and um you know maybe sort of a free

48 for all what's the best way and you got the whole NHS you know pushing evidence based
49 practice and um yeah I feel generally I mean I think this is a topic that comes up and up
50 and up that counseling psychology is kind of having a bit of an identity crisis trying to
51 find its feet what are we what do we do and um definitely thinking about supervision I
52 think that's a massive theme that I'm sort of left with

53 INT: mmm

54 Par: that I don't I don't really feel that that process of consolidating some of my training
55 really happened in supervision um that it was yeah and actually getting to the the power
56 issue which I had a really strange kind of experience in one supervision group where it
57 was almost like I felt like I was the the second supervisor that

58 INT: mmm

59 PAR: there were ah how many of us were there there were kind of four but there was
60 always one person there that was sort of never there um and there were man people were
61 kind of um much earlier on in their training and so I always felt that in that situation
62 maybe this is something I was giving myself but certainly I didn't the dynamic set up
63 where I felt or perhaps it was actually just one person in the group who was very very
64 demanding of sort of time and attention and so in that sense perhaps I felt that I had to be
65 kind of more contained and support them in this group so it was sort of um and not
66 necessarily I mean I recall on numerous times um being left to the end and then having
67 like 10 minutes to you know of a two hour session I'd have five, ten minutes that was all
68 that was left for me um or um yeah this person just kind of sabotaging um what I was
69 talking about or from the beginning of the session and I guess in terms of thinking about
70 power um I guess I would have hoped that the supervisor would have kind of taken
71 control of that a bit more and made it equal rather than me feeling like there perspective

72 was oh you don't really need this he obviously needs it more so we'll sort of gear it that
73 way. I felt I sort of coped with that as I do cope with everything but um yeah in
74 retrospect I think there was a massive power issue going on that led to me kind of feeling
75 like I had to be competent and not need supervision
76 INT: Hmm. And that you feeling you needed to be competent and not need supervision
77 partly seemed to stem from this other supervisee requiring a lot of attention in the space
78 of supervision and
79 PAR: Yeah that was it's funny I hadn't really thought about it but when this issue of
80 power in supervision I thought god I probably do need to talk about this situation coz it
81 was it was outrageous it was
82 INT: Outrageous?
83 PAR: it was actually I was I felt quite concerned about thia persons ability to be with the
84 clients because the way they conducted themself in the our supervision group was really
85 really out there um in terms of certainly with issues of power because they used to just
86 constantly challenge the supervisor like a petulant child just sort of um really kind of
87 angry and I remember at one point um we'd know something had gone on in the personal
88 life of our supervisor and we missed a week or something and he came in um when we
89 were back and we were sort of you know bring our selves in the room you know doing
90 the sort of um intro stuff and he just sort of exploded and said this is a farce I need to
91 know how you're feeling I need to know what's going on I can't I'm not prepared to sit
92 here and not know everything about what's been happening to you and I was like Jesus
93 Christ um sorry it was just really like challenging my supervisor to tell all and to their
94 credit they did handle it quite well sort of very diplomatically say you know shove off
95 this is my personal life I'm fine to be back here there's no problem

96 INT: Mmm

97 PAR: Um but yeah it was just constantly things like that

98 INT: Hmm

99 PAR: just really and then challenging because they thought the supervisor um what else
100 did he used to say um that she was um not making enough space for him ironically
101 enough in supervision where from my perspective it was all about him every single
102 session

103 INT: Hmm

104 PAR: time was you know the him show so um it was quite difficult to be in um and and
105 yeah I always felt kind of in a role of yeah I feel like it was sort of created like I was good
106 cop supervisor was bad cop and he kind of the way he related to me was everything I said
107 even if I was you know I wasn't even sort of trying to do that but sort of trying to kind of
108 support him a bit so that he would shut up basically everything I said was great and
109 everything she said was awful and so it created a very strange dynamic

110 INT: Hmm

111 PAR: um that didn't make me feel comfortable didn't make me want to come to
112 supervision coz it just felt like kind of baby sitting this other client withstanding his
113 outbursts and um yeah left me feeling like I think over six months or something I talked
114 about a client once or twice for one time for like five minutes and the other time for
115 maybe a decent session but so it was kind of well it was interesting because I guess most
116 of our supervision sessions were about our dynamic but then I was feeling like this whole
117 dynamic is just being created by this one person and I'm not actually that it may be useful
118 for him but. I'm not sure it's useful for me I probably spend the time better talking about
119 my clients INT: Hmm so this colleague in the supervision by his behaviour by the way he

120 spoke took a lot of space space away from you and so it seems that he had you attribute a
121 lot of power to him through that but I wondered also what ah you mentioned earlier about
122 the supervisor perhaps um should of done something in relation to that could you say
123 more about that?

124 PAR: Yeah um I mean it was it was kind of a complete power free for all because the
125 certainly the supervisor um was a powerful person um and kind of prone it it just seemed
126 like a lots of balancing so she used to say I know I can kind of fill a space um please
127 challenge me you know if you feel you're not if we're sort of going off or whatever and I
128 felt I felt quite comfortable with that because I'm I'm not someone who kind of um fears
129 speaking my mind or whatever and I actually quite liked just the the sort of boldness of it
130 and the complete sort of acknowledgement that she knows that that's what she does and
131 so sort of opening the floor to kind of um say look we need I need to talk about this um
132 just the openness I found quite good because she could of just been controlling and um
133 not aware of it and denying it or whatever so

134 INT: So she was aware of herself and inviting, um...

135 PAR: Yes aware of how she could maybe take over the dynamic and um she was
136 therefore open to feedback on that

137 INT: Hmm

138 PAR: Um but I think that's what this other person really struggled with and um so yeah it
139 was in a way I mean I think that's probably some of my own stuff but it drew me in every
140 time to trying to manage the situation. Coz you know that's what I've done that's my sort
141 of history is sort of making negotiating between people you know mediating and um I'm
142 not sure if I'm answering your question I can't quite remember what you were asking me
143 but um

144 INT: That's ok

145 PAR: Um yeah I just felt like a mediator um and I don't know whether that has
146 something to do with the reason she didn't kind of interfere and the reason why um well
147 she did her best with this powerful other individual but I felt that you know rather than
148 just addressing his behaviour some perhaps reflection on the impact he was then having
149 on us could have been quite

150 INT: Mmm

151 PAR: coz it wasn't just me it was certainly other people in the group who were
152 completely kind of ignored um and I think that may I don't know but I I sort of felt like
153 you know with the counseling psychology training they know you know it's very long its
154 very intense we're sort of doing all these different things that there's somehow this
155 feeling that we don't need maybe as much support or something I don't

156 INT: Mmm

157 PAR: But I sort of felt perhaps that's just me trying to make sense of it but um certainly it
158 felt that um yeah that there just wasn't too much concern for the impact of this person on
159 the other people in the group, she did her best to sort of manage him as an entity but the
160 impact he was having on the group was kind of it was kind of touched on a little bit but I
161 wonder I wonder whether it would've been way too much for this person to take if we'd
162 said like do you realize every time you know it's all about you and nobody else sort of
163 gets to talk about what they want and you sort of direct everything so that probably would
164 have resulted in a big blow out fight but um I don't know. That was sort of my feeling on
165 it

166 INT: Mmm. You seem to be you being in a position of having to mediate having to um
167 put his needs ahead of your own in terms of what you wanted to use the supervision for

168 and um part of that is you talked about your own history of mediating um partly him his
169 um his way of being in the room of quite dominating and quite powerful perhaps
170 PAR: But also very childish
171 INT: Yeah. You spoke of um in this context of ah you wondered if there was a
172 presumption that because you were doing a Counselling Psychology course that that you
173 would be ok with it
174 PAR: Mmm
175 INT: Could you say more about that, maybe?
176 PAR: Um yeah I mean I don't know whether that's me just blowing my own trumpet but
177 um I think just generally um I don't know there I've just always felt a sort of hesitancy
178 from other people with other trainings I guess because now the counseling psychology
179 training is doctoral and we becomes doctors um that I don't know I just always sensed a
180 kind of um you know in centres and things you've got like Gestalt and psychodynamic
181 and all kinds of different things. I just always kind of felt separate from them um
182 whenever there was a larger group on training days or whatever um maybe again that's
183 just just my sort of take on it but um
184 INT: Mmm
185 PAR: I'm just aware of a few times um when there were actually other counseling
186 psychology trainees and stuff we all sort of just gravitated together and then everybody
187 else was kind of more like free and easy but we were sort of like oohh you know this
188 something different something coz obviously everybody's different but somehow it was
189 us and them. Um and I guess yes I think there's something in this change too coz also
190 throughout my training we had lots of um lots of classes with the previous counseling
191 psychology trainees that were actually taking a longer course then us but were not going

192 to end up with a doctorate

193 INT: Mmm

194 PAR: and that was always really awkward because I mean I don't know again if there

195 was nothing really expressed but I think all of us felt very kind of defensive that here we

196 were we were sort of a year behind them in essence but we were going to well we thought

197 we were going to finish at the same time as them but with this sort of higher achievement

198 or higher designation. Um and I think I think that sort of adds to this kind of I think again

199 that hits back on the identity of counseling psychology and now if things weren't sort of

200 bad enough I think there's this massive division almost between us and those you know

201 who don't have a doctorate that will

202 INT: Mmm

203 PAR: and it's just kind of um I feel like I'm a bit all over the place but I think that's kind

204 of this concept is that it is a bit I kind of feel on one hand sometimes I'm being seen as

205 um you know some kind of authority because I'm working towards this doctor thing um

206 and other times I feel very uncertain about what my training means or who I'm going to

207 be and how I'm going to fit into the whole you know mental health arena um and yeah

208 maybe if I feel that I would assume that others are even more confused about what

209 counseling psychology means and who we are and um but I think you can't get around

210 the fact that having a doctor before your name is you know its something

211 INT: Mmm

212 PAR: it's not you're not it is something different from being a Gestalt therapist who

213 practices you know I think a lot of the stuff that they've done I'm really interested in that

214 approach and I think its really amazing and quite different from what we've been doing

215 but there's this kind of intrinsic hierarchy there that we're the doctor we're more aligned

216 with sort of traditional um you know the whole societal model where you put people and
217 anybody historically who's a doctor is kind of you know a figure head in the community
218 they're somebody you trust um and I think that is quite interesting coz I think counseling
219 psychology kind of straddles um you know all those other therapies are kind of thought
220 of as alternative kinds of medicines or they can be hippy dippy you can go and see a
221 counselor in like a a herbal hippy shop do you know what I mean but then we kind of you
222 know as counseling psychologists we're kind of into that whole counseling world
223 obviously but then we're doctors so its kind of a a contradiction
224 INT: Mmm
225 PAR: I think where as clinical psychologists you know they're in hospitals they work
226 with psychiatrists for the most part it's quite clear but we're kind of half that half hippy
227 dippy kind of alternative side
228 INT: ah ha
229 PAR: I'm really going off on one
230 INT: So it seems like ah there's a feeling for you of um us and them or a feeling of a little
231 bit defensive or different from other people by virtue of being a counseling psychologist
232 versus other kind of helping professions and you also speak though of um within your
233 counseling psychology training of um different levels of of attainment of qualification
234 and feeling of difference happening because of that
235 PAR: Hmm Yeah I think it really it really just leads to one big identity crisis because um
236 and you know certainly finding that now looking at different jobs and talking to
237 colleagues who are looking for jobs and you know I got an email from someone the other
238 day saying oh I need to start thinking about this private work because I'm becoming
239 really stubborn I just wanna work the way that we've been taught and that I'm interested

240 in and you know looking at the NHS there's just no way that's going to happen and its it
241 is really strange that we kind of there's lots of different directions we can go in and lots
242 of different ways we can find employment but its it seems like you kind of have to
243 choose you know we're learned to work this certain way but you're either going to have
244 to just sort of go one way or the other or sort of mould yourself to sort of fir different
245 things and there's no at least I haven't seen it an obvious example of a job where it's like
246 yes I'll just walk in there and I'll do what I've been doing for three years or four years
247 and um that's frustrating its frustrating

248 INT: Mmm

249 PAR: Coz it just doesn't seem to make sense but who knows it may all be different in a
250 couple of years again but um yeah I think my feeling is that it must impact on the
251 dynamic certainly in supervision um and power because if are kind of uncertain of who
252 we are and they're uncertain of who we are and um

253 INT: But yet at the same time there's um you feel they um feel like counseling
254 psychologists should be ok within that context because of of what they know that we're
256 doing at least of doing a doctorate

257 PAR: yeah but I don't know whether that's more just because they don't know what
258 we're doing so the unknown is kind of like we stay away from it lets just assume you're
259 fine because I don't really know what your doing um yeah I don't know and I find myself
260 thinking about my other supervision group and I don't know why um that yeah I don't
261 know if there's anything else you want to ask me about what I was talking about but um
262 sort of moving in another direction

263 INT: Um we can go with that

264 PAR: OK um yeah no just thinking about this other supervision group I had um where the

265 whole there was a clear bias from our quite a few of us were involved in this we didn't all
266 have supervision together but quite a few of us had the same supervisor and he was quite
267 um anti [participants university] I wouldn't necessarily say anti counseling psychology
268 but um just kind of dismissive like you know he's Jungian I think in a lot of ways
269 extremely brilliant like really the best supervision I've ever had

270 INT: Mmm

271 PAR: Um but there was this kind of you're sort of getting something good but then
272 constantly having the carpet pulled from under you like you know your whole training is
273 crap the people there are crap its just sort of bad um vibes about what I was actually
274 doing but then being told that I'm good um real kind of mixed messages I guess I'm
275 trying to say and I don't again I mean I found that to be an incredible kind of power
276 dynamic and that here's this sort of guru and you can't sort of get away from it because
277 what you're getting is really interesting and the way that you're sort of picking apart your
278 clients and looking at it is like something just a completely different experience than I've
279 had really Um I found it really useful and really really helpful um but then at the same
280 time kind of feeling like its again trying to kind of fit with the supervisor's idea of what
281 should be going on rather than having sort of freedom to explore you know what it means
282 to be a counseling psychologist again and you know maybe maybe shock horror using
283 some Cognitive kind of techniques in the work INT: um yeah just just kind of very clear
284 kind of um whats the word I'm looking for like biases coming from the supervisor that
285 means that you kind of you play along because that's the tone they're setting you don't
286 kind of explore maybe something further than you think maybe interesting

287 INT: I wonder um as part of that you talked about a particular supervisor as um you used
288 the word guru um whether it was um that sense of not being able to maybe assert more of

289 a counseling psychology position maybe within the context um was that based on him as
290 a supervisor or um because a particular perspective he came from or
291 PAR: Maybe just the person he was
292 INT: the person he was right
293 PAR: Um
294 INT: as an individual
295 PAR: yeah he's I'm actually still seeing him for my private clients bizarrely enough um
296 he's I find him incredibly difficult and stubborn and awkward and we went through a
297 whole phase where his boundaries were horrific um ah he was going through personal
298 things but um yeah it I don't know if this is my masochistic side
299 INT: Mmm
300 PAR: because he he's just so uncontained it amazes me every time that you know even if
301 we only have five minutes and we just sit there and I just sort of blurt stuff mess out
302 about my client that I don't just I completely out of context it doesn't make any sense but
303 the insights that he comes up with a just incredible and I do think there is an intimidation
304 factor there that um because you know God knows I haven't I haven't had enough time to
305 sort of do all the reading especially into sort of psychodynamic theory that I've wanted to
306 over the course of the last couple of years. It's really challenging um you know here's
307 somebody who's done Jungian training which is pretty extreme and practicing for like
308 years and years and years um kind of really forcing you into um I don't know just putting
309 all your skills on the line really and not sort of just sort of working with the presumption
310 that you should know what he's talking about and um its yeah I mean I certainly um I I
311 feel that again I sort of handle his um power in an alright way but I do know that there's a
312 lot of people who struggle with kind of um fighting against that intimidation factor

313 INT: Mmm

314 PAR: but um yeah its kind of funny I I'm now thinking about my other supervisor that I
315 had that um who I didn't find intimidating at all um it was always kind of weird she was
316 always she was just this real mumsy lady and I'd have supervision in her house she had
317 like a little annex off the side and she'd always like make you a cup of tea and sit down it
318 was like really cosy in this little room and it didn't feel at all like supervision I've had at
319 school or either of the really it was just so like cosy and nice and it was a chat but its
320 funny because I actually think ok so she didn't have these like brilliant interpretations or
321 anything but um I always felt comfortable to bring anything and we would talk about
322 everything and I always felt that I got exactly what I need which is something that I
323 honestly haven't had or maybe with the exception of another one other supervisor I had
324 but I only had him for a very short time but it almost feels like I've had either kind of
325 intimidating supervision where for one reason or another whether its well yeah in a
326 couple of cases definitely been the supervisor who's kind of an intimidating character for
327 one reason or another then the dynamic created is intimidating for me for a reason or
328 another

329 INT: Mmm

330 PAR: or I've had really cosy cosy supervision which feels like its not really challenging
331 me its not really making me feel uncomfortable its kind of nice and warm and cosy but I
332 feel much more comfortable to share whatever it is that I want to and its always received
333 well and its always received seriously and like lets think about this but its not it hasn't led
334 to me really you know challenging aspects of myself or really challenging like awful
335 aspects of my clients but its I think I think that going back to what I said sort of right at
336 the beginning is that I think I've valued having that kind of diversity because its been I

337 think you need to have both you need somewhere you feel comfortable and its not like all
338 a you know a terrifying or a hugely intimidating experience but then I do think
339 sometimes there's ugly stuff in client work or in yourself and how you relate to clients or
340 whatever that you can't kind of you know cosy away from

341 INT: Mmm, it seems though that there's two or three different experiences but maybe
342 two more towards one end two quite separate separate experiences in a way of um cosy
343 or intimidating but both being of value in different ways is that how you describe it?

344 PAR: Yeah I mean um I haven't had the cosy variety for quite some time um I guess that
345 was perhaps more suitable in like the beginning of the training you kind of feel that um
346 yeah I know I know some people had um very intimidating supervision right at the
347 beginning and it was like quite difficult to cope with I think at that time when you're
348 trying to sort of um assimilate everything and all the different things that we had to cope
349 with at that time but um yeah I it does make me think actually I've been thinking about
350 that more sort of looking at requirements for jobs and things about what kind of
351 supervisor I would be because obviously um you know its most likely something that I'm
351 going to be doing at some point um I did actually have the experience before I even
352 started training working in the NHS I did supervise um a few junior staff um not quite I
353 obviously didn't have any training or whatever but I supervised them there experience
354 with clients and we talked about it was I didn't sort of know what we were doing at the
355 time but I guess what we were doing was you know proper supervision um and I think
356 yeah I I guess the answer is I don't know

357 INT: Mmm

358 PAR: um I mean that in itself feels quite intimidating because I guess um I guess your
359 fear always is you're going to get somebody who knows more about something than you

360 do it feels sort of out of out of your depth but um yeah and I guess that's that's my sort of
361 thinking about the two different things that I've experienced I've either experienced
362 people that sort of know everything and there's never anything you know you're going to
363 know more than them versus other people who don't come across as um that sort of guru
364 that knows everything but they show an openness to talk about anything that's come up
365 as meaningful to you and I think [sighs] um I don't know I'm really torn on which I
366 actually feel that I benefitted more from

367 INT: Mmm can I ask you talked just a bit earlier about a difference in maybe at the start
368 of your training of um more caring and supportive supervision perhaps as helpful at the
369 start. Can you say more about that?

370 PAR: Yeah um I just remember I mean at the start when we began it was all person
371 centred and I found working solely in that method very challenging um and I think
372 obviously to have supervision in that style of working is not going to be particularly
373 challenging in not like psychodynamic work um and I think I found I think I found a real
374 appreciation for that kind of working through my supervisor um I think she was I think
375 she was very very good and very very good at kind of sticking within that framework but
376 helping with me some psychodynamic kind of thinking or some cognitive ways of
377 working um at that point which I think was really helpful because I think I don't know
378 whether its I know quite a few of us were sort of feeling quite you know forced into this
379 person centred kind of excuse me approach um and feeling like its you know its the worst
380 thing ever to try and accommodate or work anything else in or ask a question you cant do
381 it you cant do it and she kind of made that she worked with me and who I was to sort of
382 become a bit more human and I think at the beginning to kind of see that you know it was
383 really important to learn individual techniques and stuff and to read the theory to

384 understand it but that um I had to be me and I think that kind of worked in a cosy setting
385 that would have been more difficult to kind of achieve in a more challenging kind of I
386 think especially being ??? in my own therapy I think if I'd had a really challenging
387 supervisor at that point I would've found it really deconstructing

388 INT: Mmm

389 PAR: I don't think I would have done enough work in my therapy to kind of withstand
390 [laughs] probably um you know quite a challenge because you know I did as part of this
391 whole um mediator kind of protector kind of role that I have um fixer that's what I am I
392 think I hadn't unpicked that enough at that stage to kind of and I think she helped me
393 with that in a gentle kind of way but I think if I'd had a more challenging supervisor it
394 really would have been quite jarring at that stage but for my own development of my
395 training of everything yeah I think it would have been too much

396 INT: Mmm so the your ability to withstand a more intimidating style of supervision is
397 something that comes about in your personal development and that personal development
398 occurring across the training

399 PAR: Mmm yeah definitely because then you know supervision at university I did really
400 struggle with that because um I kind of had a situation where the person who initially
401 interviewed me in quite some depth and really pulled apart my entire family background
402 and through it in my face and was a bit scary um then became my personal tutor and then
403 became my supervisor as well so this person had quite a lot of information about me
404 personally um and I did find that they weren't shy about sort of making interpretations in
405 kind of out of context so if it was an academic matter or whatever sort of drawing in
406 personal information they had on me and ah I still have some questions about whether
407 that's particularly ethical

408 INT: Mmm

409 PAR: but um yeah I do think when you're kind of um truing to put someone together but
410 also trying pull them all apart at the same time it was just I found it too much at some
411 points I mean I was I feel confident that over the course of time you know I'd done an
412 awful lot of work in therapy and that's supported my work with clients and how I see
413 things and how I see everything but um I don't feel it's necessary to to dismantle people
414 in that stage to quite the degree which I felt like I experienced. Of trying to yeah um yeah
415 I don't know quite what I was saying but um does that make sense?

416 INT: I think so yeah

417 PAR: If it doesn't just say and I'll try and but I think its kind of um yeah kind of this
418 sense that throughout this training you need to kind of you know strip yourself back to
419 the bare bones and like you know be very sure of what's there and um and I I think that's
420 fine but I think it's a process that everybody needs to be in control of kind of themselves
421 and let them sort of take that at a pace that kind of works

422 INT: Mmm

423 PAR: I felt that sometimes especially within the university supervision that that was kind
424 of pushed a little further than maybe it need be I mean we had a joke in our last year's
425 supervision that the supervisor was just taking us down one by one he wouldn't stop until
426 we were all crying basically he got us all to a point it was actually see here's another
427 power issue it was actually interesting because um we did as a group challenge him on it
428 and say you know we don't think what's going on here is necessarily you know
429 appropriate because it was it was really really like lets find everybody's weak spots and
430 then pummul it and drag it out and we have an hour and a half lets just put them in the
431 shit you know pressure cooker and I think perhaps it would be appropriate you know

432 once we've finished training to have supervision and experiences where that does really
433 push you but I think when you're when you're in the midst of you know doing your
434 placements doing your assignments and working trying to just balance everything else
435 going to personal therapy as well I don't think it's the right time to kind of you know
436 really go for the gut um he'd go for the jugular um

437 INT: I guess I was that kind of leads me on to my next sort of question was about in what
438 ways if any has being a trainee influenced your experiences supervision experiences?

439 PAR:????? Yeah I mean being a trainee is I I've pondered it quite a bit and thought about
440 whether I would actually do this again if I had I mean knowing what it's entailed would I
441 really really chose so again. Um some days I say yes but there's a lot of days where I say
442 no um I think I think it's taken a lot out of me and really impacted on my life just
443 generally um you know it was kind of bizarre my family they live far away and um when
444 I sort of submitted my thesis um or I'd taken a break over xmas and I'm not doing it for
445 two weeks nothing and the feedback from my family going you're like a different person
446 on the phone you're just kind of like relaxed and happy and we haven't spoke to this
447 person for quite some years

448 INT: Mmm

449 PAR: and I think you know its its its massive what we have to do and I think I think its its
450 been really awful that you know I've had to work practically all the way through and I
451 think that's you know in the first couple of years I was working like twenty hours which
452 was a lot to kind of balance with everything else that I had to do and um I think
453 supervision if it's its obviously necessary but I I do think at times I found that its its just
454 too much like if you want to really really push me on you just don't have enough brain
455 energy for everything I think. It's just a matter of you know [laughs] you can only do so

456 much at once

457 INT: When you say too much then sort of on top of all the other things you are having to
458 do of of work and and your course

459 PAR: of work and different assignments that are often quite involved but completely
460 different um obviously managing all your client work just the personal therapy its you
461 know it's a huge amount and then of course attending lectures trying to process all that
462 and do the reading and your brain is just constantly you know I just found that and I
463 remember um I'm surprised I didn't completely lose my mind in the first couple of years
464 because I was literally like every day I'd sort of I'd go and I'd see clients and then I'd
465 have to be in supervision mode and then I'd go and Nanny children and then I'd go it was
466 like every day it was like three different things it was just constantly Like put my
467 different hat on I'm with this person now and um I did find that kind of jarring sometimes
468 be okay I'm in supervision now now I need to think where as I'd just spent you know
469 some time with kids needing to kind of be fun and relaxed and not thinking and
470 sometimes it did feel a bit forced and I think you know we're only human we can only
471 kind of yeah do so much hold so much um and I do think certain supervision
472 environments were more accepting of that than others I think some supervisors there
473 were really aware of that situation and knowing you know how to sort of manage that and
474 support me um and to acknowledge you know me and where I was and perhaps and you
475 know that would be different on different days on different sessions but I found some
476 supervisors really not taking that into account that you should always be on you should
477 always be able to tap into just the right literature and spout it out and make these
478 connections and you know its like you some days its just not possible

479 INT: Mmm, so less accommodating or less understanding of the training

480 PAR: of the pressures

481 INT: process pressures

482 PAR: yeah definitely definitely definitely

483 INT: and the fact that there was differences between supervisors within that

484 understanding what was the impact of that?

485 PAR: frustration um yeah I would get ah yeah I have a slight issue with injustice I will

486 fight every time I'm learning I'm learning to sort of choose my battles but I did find it

487 really really frustrating that in particular one supervisor that I had that seemed to just

488 refuse to acknowledge that there's stresses you know that I ca beyond there's a product of

489 the environment that I'm in or that we were in that can only sort of do so much I found it

490 really frustrating just acknowledge it just seems to be like you can always do more you

491 could always offer more you could always push yourself more um yeah and as an aside I

492 mean certainly from the university um there's always been this feedback that we coz I

493 think as a trainee you kind of you do struggle to share with anyone that you're kind of

494 struggling or that you're you know you're not coping because I found on the whole there

495 was a general kind of you know feeling coming back that ah suddenly the university's

496 saying well everybody else is managing you know if its you're in trouble its just you and

497 there was a sort of funny thing happening in the summer where quite a few people people

498 were being told this and ah for some reason I chose to send an email to the whole group

499 to say you know is anybody else how's everybody else doing with this and actually there

500 was quite a few people that were um struggling to do what we were supposed to be doing

501 and um it was only because we sort of came together that we were able to kind of impact

502 upon that because what we were being told that its just us its just you everybody else is

503 submitting everything as they should and its just you and I guess that kind of steps away

504 from supervision but I do think the university as a whole is kind of our supervisor and um
505 its funny how it actually echoes what I was saying at the beginning of feeling that um in
506 that supervision group I had to I had to feel like I didn't need anything that I was coping
507 in that dynamic and whatever because it's exactly the same um you gotta I think I've well
508 I've been saying every where that I just found it hilarious when somebody from the
509 university did say that you know they try and break us um because I did get that
510 impression that like what are you trying to do like how um but ah yeah

511 INT: Ok uh I my final question really is um if you can tell me about and you've talked
512 about this in different ways anyway but um can you tell me about your notions of power
513 in supervision what it brings up for you

514 PAR: ah yeah I mean its funny I'm it was really funny because you kind of think about it
515 and you think oh yeah that's going to be interesting and then I suddenly kind of
516 connected with what that was actually asking and thought well actually there's all kinds
517 of power um I don't even kind of its not sort of a conscious kind of though but all I need
518 to do is sort of tap into that idea a little bit and all of a sudden I'm like god yeah there was
519 all kinds of power dynamics in every supervision group I had um um in varying degrees
520 um but I think its um I think I think in many ways as a trainee um well at least in my
521 experience that you are quite vulnerable you kind of its sort of this inbuilt you need first
522 of all you need your clients to get your hours to get your whatever then you need your um
523 you know you need your placements and supervision you get reports and um its all it is
524 very much from a and often your offering your services for free and um there's different
525 degrees of where you're working and what their benefits are from your free working and

526 INT: Mmm

527 PAR: but it does very much feel that you know whilst you're offering all kinds of great

528 support to people ultimately you're the one whose needing the situation and I think um
529 that's that's quite a strange place to be in and I think at times you know I did feel a bit
530 resentful about that that but then on the other hand you know I didn't I didn't really I
531 mean when you are actually with its funny how its interesting its funny how when you're
532 with a client I never resented being there and not getting paid but sometimes when you're
533 in supervision and you're kind of I guess being forced to sort of do things you don't want
534 to do or situations you don't want to be in or whatever and you're like you know why am
535 I doing I'm you know I'm doing good work and I'm now being forced to kind of catow to
536 the supervisor or whatever's going on um just because I need this placement and yeah I
537 think its

538 INT: So that's interesting perhaps of cotowing to the supervisor perhaps if you're having
539 difficulties in that context in that relationship because of of needing him of needing

540 PAR: Its definitely a bit different in different situations but I think I've been in at least a
541 couple of situations where um the work I'm doing with clients is kind of financially
542 benefitting the supervisor because they're ok they're in a position of you know bringing
543 me on board to provide a service but they're getting paid and um I do think that creates a
544 bit of um yeah a if you're not getting what you want from them then I think it it does kind
545 of create this weird kind of dynamic that you know they're kind of all powerful and
546 you're kind of without anything really, does that make sense?

547 INT: Hmm

548 PAR: yeah um because yeah because its frustrating sometimes but um yeah

549 INT: That um sense of frustration um yeah can you tell me more about that I wonder if
550 it's disempowered or

551 PAR: yeah um I think just thinking about two supervisors that I've sort of had that were

552 in that situation and I think um I don't know if this is just but this is what I'm sort of
553 thinking is that there was a tendency for them to be a bit more disinterested um that and I
554 guess that that brings to mind you know what what is their priority is their bottom line
555 well as long as this person is here and seeing clients and making me money then yeah
556 [laughs]. You know where as generally speaking I feel that if that dynamic wasn't there
557 that the supervisor seemed more interested in like it just wasn't there so I felt like
558 everything was about the clients and about you know what's going on and there was no
559 potential ulterior something to gain or something to be um something in that that there
560 was a client um it was just about the client and about me and about our relationship um I
561 don't know whether that's me jumping to sort of an assumption but um if I do think about
562 it there was very much this kind of sense potential sense of indifference about the client
563 work in those situations where the supervisor was directly gaining financially from the
564 fact that that client was there

565 INT: Mmm

566 PAR: um a sense of indifference that you know I just I never experienced with other
567 supervisors again I don't um I don't know if there's something in that or not I guess it
568 would be interesting to see if other people have that feeling but um or whether that's
569 [laughs] my resentment bubbling away I don't know but um I do feel there's something
570 in that yeah

571 INT: Ok well um we spent some time reflecting on supervision and notions of power um
572 is there anything else that you would like to say?

573 PAR: Um yeah I think I mean I've said it but I think that my feeling is that there is a real
574 um there is a real vulnerability to us as trainees at being very much um you know needing
575 to play by the rules and needing to sort of jump through the hoops um and do what we're

576 supposed to do and I do think that I do think there is I guess as someone whose um
577 worked at placements and now has a couple of private clients and is sort of out you know
578 I'm seeing clients not because I have to fill out time sheets and you know do all that the
579 difference and even actually with the same supervisors so having had the supervisor in a
580 placement context and in a private context there is something different in that you know I
581 don't I'm in control these are my clients I'm coming to you because I need this but
582 there's there is something different in the dynamic that I don't I don't need you if I don't
583 come and see you I get another supervisor it doesn't you know it doesn't there is I feel
584 more in control generally speaking in supervision because um because I do I think there's
585 so many hoops for us to jump through in training that inevitably you do become kind of
586 vulnerable and needing to do supervision I'm needing to do this and I'm needing to do
587 that and its

588 INT: Is there room for you to not jump through those hoops?

589 PAR: Yeah I don't think so at all I think you know certainly even to the degree of you
590 know what I was talking about before that even if your even if like yeah ok I'll jump
591 through those hoops but I might need a bit more time because this that or the other I
592 didn't feel that was ever really an option or supported very consistently or you know um
593 appropriately so in a sense it does feel like you just have to keep jump jump jump jump if
594 you if you drop that pace um then its like you can't do that [laughs] so it's not even a
595 matter of um ok jump through the hoops within the confines of your you know life
596 circumstances and whatever else is going on um there's more pressure than that and I
597 think whilst you're in that kind of pressurized situation of obviously especially I think
598 you know there was certainly some people who got to a certain point and thought it's
599 easier like we've lost a few people off our course along the way and I think they left at

600 various points where it made sense to them to leave um but I think you get to a certain
601 point and perhaps the more stubborn of us think well I've come far enough through I
602 can't go back I've got like I've got to go forward and I think that does I think that does
603 make us vulnerable and I think it does definitely impact on every situation that we're in
604 but certainly supervision that we're kind of in need of something and I think that affects
605 well it definitely has for me affected you know how I've been in those supervision
606 sessions coz personally um you know there were sessions I remember going off some
607 days to supervision talking to my husband and saying you know I'm just not going to say
608 anything today I just can't I don't have the energy today to kind of go outside of myself I
609 just I don't and you know that was the right decision at that time but if I had I not had all
610 of the you know the stuff going on then I would have used supervision quite differently
611 because you know these days I go to supervision not feeling overwhelmed kind of you
612 know I can go and kind of get out of it what I need when I need it rather than it being
613 more dictated by my current state and how I'm managing all of the demands and all of
614 that sort of thing so yeah I think there's something about being in training and
615 consistently being kind of vulnerable

616 INT: Thanks very much

617 PAR: no worries

APPENDIX E
TRANSCRIPT – ‘BELLA’

- 1 INT: Ok so the first question is can you describe for me how you have found
2 your experience of supervision in your development as a counselling
3 psychologist?
4 P: yes um in general I think it is one of the most vital part of the training and
5 um especially last year because I perceived that I did have a quite good
6 supervision um it was one of the best it was I I felt that I learnt a lot through
7 the supervision session more than more than this years because there are some
8 problems some difficulties with the current supervisor but in general the way
9 that I perceive it it is quite a vital part of our training
10 INT: ahmm
11 P: because it's a way of understanding how you work and being challenged
12 sensitively challenged and somebody who has experience and ah ideally you
13 trust their clinical opinion to help you to address some of your behaviours and
14 to understand more how you behave as a therapist so um the first time that I
15 had supervision in my life was on this training last year and um it was it was I
16 found it basic more than anything it was the most useful for me in that
17 regarding my clinical work
18 INT: mmm
19 P: so theory and all this things were not that that they are important but not
20 like as as the supervision. Even if it s just the supervisor at placement or
21 sometimes group supervision at the university
22 INT: mmm
23 P: or even peer supervision which sometimes we used to have with other of
24 my colleagues so in general I found it very very ah um important and a great
25 learning opportunity about learning about yourself as a therapist
26 INT: what did you find vital about it what made you feel that it's more

27 important than other things?

28 P: it's more because um I think it has to do with ????? its important how you

29 fit a well with the therapist so I think it has to do of course with the person that

30 you have and if you fit together so um if you fit with the supervisor and you

31 trust the supervisor in terms of you can bring difficult feelings that you might

32 have with a client

33 INT: Mmm

34 P: And ah when the supervisor the way that they helps you to normalise

35 somehow that yeah it can be its its ok to have these negative feelings lets say

36 for a client and actually this helped me to learn to learn to use my feelings in

37 order to inform my work as well so in psychodynamic terms somehow to

38 address my countertransference and ah learn um more about my clients so it

39 was I think this again that mainly from supervision it couldn't be you know

40 theory or ah something like that and the fact that its in supervision or the other

41 colleagues or your supervisor um they can observe things that you cannot

42 observe about the pattern that you do have with the client lets say

43 INT: mmm

44 P: so that the way that you are as a therapist with particular client and um you

45 know then you realise about yourself when somebody address that noticing

46 something to you to your behaviour so this I find it very very useful in general

47 INT: Something about being or talking about your clients and your work with

48 other people P: Yep INT: gave you something that you wouldn't be aware of

49 so much if you were just thinking about it by yourself

50 P: yes yes

51 INT: than when with another person

52 P: Yes its because there are some blind spots that you can't really see for by

53 yourself so its ah yeah somebody else can notice something that you cannot at
54 the moment about some clients so its um it was um very its been very very a
55 great learning opportunity

56 INT: in general supervision INT: Can you tell me about that sense of um that
57 sense of fit

58 P: Yeah

59 INT: or trust that you talked about

60 P: yes and I do have to in my mind I have a little bit of splitting to my mind
61 with my last supervisor and the current supervisor because they are the
62 difference is very very big

63 INT: Mmm

64 P: Um so not in terms of the fit so much because I think even with my current
65 supervisor it's ok our relationship is not its fine it's the power thing that
66 bothers me a little bit but ah for example last year I felt that it was um I guess I
67 guess it has to do with how open is the person the supervisor as a supervisor
68 himself or herself

69 INT: Mmm

70 P: um to fit somehow trust that you can trust them that you don't have to be to
71 trust them to open up more less not to trust them with something to disclose
72 something but more to bring your feelings and to help you to challenge you
73 but in a sensitive way in order to help you open up and about about the kind of
74 fit that I did say before I don't know how to describe it its just um maybe it's
75 the way you when you feel that somebody the way they challenge you the way
76 that try to address some things as supervisor

77 INT: Mmm

78 P: doesn't make you defensive somehow and this I think has to do a lot with
79 their skills as supervisors but also if you fit as maybe because you know a

80 particular style doesn't fit to some people

81 INT: Hmm

82 P: maybe a good example would be that here we do we did have a supervisor

83 in the group supervision in the university who tends to um to who tends to

84 bring up more of your personal stuff because he believes that um its important

85 with your in your work with your clients

86 INT: Mmm

87 P: Some of the trainees don't like that because they feel thay have

88 characterised it as very intrusive and they cant they don't feel that its relevant

89 so much as how they are as how they feel about particular issues in terms of

90 some clients

91 INT: Mmm

92 P: Me personally I love that

93 INT: love that

94 P: yeah it felt so it felt that it speaks to me it made sense for me it made sense

95 to when I would present a client to focus a lot to help me to focus more on my

96 reactions towards this client as a way of understanding what is going on in the

97 relationship with the client so for me it was very very relevant and it was very

98 helpful to understand where am I with some clients although other people

99 didn't really um like that found found it very intrusive so maybe this is a more

100 characteristic example of how you fit if you fit with somebody or not with

101 their style

102 INT: Mmm So style of the supervisor their skills um but also something about

103 what you or the trainee what you bring

104 P: Yep

105 INT: to them as well

106 P: Yep. It's for me its important I always like in supervision when they push
107 me to to challenge me to see my part in the relationship everything that um
108 because I perceive it anyway the client work as ah relational it's a relationship
109 INT: Mmm

110 P: its intersubjective experience so you cannot I'm not so much in I don't
111 believe that much that its more anything about the client and the transference
112 lets say its about you as well and ah what you're picking up from the client so
113 that's why it helps me that INT: I wondered when you you have liked that
114 supervisors bringing out getting you to focus on your reactions and your
115 feelings in relation to clients um is it particularly just focussed on your work
116 with clients or is it something about how you feel in relation to what's
117 happening in supervision or towards your supervisor does that come up as
118 well?

119 P: ah you mean usually its in relation with clients it hasn't really happened to
120 to address that in relation to the supervisor last year my supervisor in
121 placement did tha. For example there was a period I'm not sure if this is what
122 you're asking so tell me but um there was a period that I was very feeling very
123 I didn't feel confident about my work and somehow I had to um I was a bit
124 more passive maybe in my role and I was a bit more um actually I was I I
125 there was a period that I felt really de-skilled something like that so he there
126 was a moment that there was a time that he addressed that in the relationship
127 with us. So he did say ah he that he was wondering if it has to do with our
128 relationship maybe he tended to be a very um to over feed me to give me a lot
129 of feedback

130 INT: Mmm

131 P: and a lot of you know he would try to help me so much a lot so somehow I
132 would feel a little bit de-skilled I would not feel so independent. Is this what

133 you were saying before

134 INT: Mmm

135 P: But usually it doesn't happen that usually its always in relation with some

136 clients. And at that particular time I found it quite uncomfortable to be honest

137 because its in the relationship with a specific supervisor but also it was very

138 useful because it made me think a little bit. Maybe sad um but also I liked that

139 the supervisor could be so open to address that and to think of his part in the

140 relationship with you.

141 INT: Mmm

142 P: and I think that not many supervisors do that

143 INT: Mmm

144 P: you know to think because it means that are you they need to reflect on

145 their part as well and maybe take responsibility of if of take their

146 responsibility as well. So I later found it quite ah useful that. And he helped

147 me his thinking not so much what he did to me but his thinking his thinking

148 about that everything is in relationship somehow he helped me to think more

149 like that with my clients as well. Because its like modelling when you see

150 somebody doing that in supervision as well that even as a supervisee how I

151 have been feeling at a particular period he addressed that the possibility of

152 being something in the relationship that he might maybe probably over feed

153 me. This helped me to think more again in a more relational way about my

154 clients as well

155 INT: Mmm

156 P: Because I saw that he did that somehow that's the modelling

157 INT: Ok. So this dynamic at that point in time it had a positive affect on your

158 on your practice

159 P: Yes

160 INT: on your work with clients

161 P: And still sometimes it hasn't it never happens with my current supervisor

162 and no way to happen that because of the power dynamic as well

163 INT: Mmm

164 P: Ah this is the reason that I decided to participate here as well but with my

165 current supervisor its its just she's never going to she will never do it because

166 as I said it means taking responsibility of your part and be open it means that

167 you're very open to explore

168 INT: Mmm

169 P: ah what's happening in the relationship

170 INT: Can I ask you mentioned feeling uncomfortable at the time

171 P: yeah

172 INT: with that past supervisor

173 P: Mmm

174 INT: what did that mean for you?

175 P: I guess it was more the very intimate that suddenly the focus was ah very

176 much in our relationships relationship and um and I had to think as well is it

177 that he over feeds me maybe that you know and and if it was that I it would be

178 uncomfortable to tell him and yes you do that somehow

179 INT: Mmm

180 P: um yes so maybe the intimate you know that it was more intimate made me

181 feel uncomfortable but then feeling how open it was to explore the issue this it

182 felt really nice

183 INT: So the closeness of at that moment with the supervisor

184 P: yeah

185 INT: was something uncomfortable about that

186 P: yeah yes yes

187 INT: but also helpful

188 P: yeah. It was helpful in general as a interaction

189 INT: Hmm

190 P: But yeah I think it was that feeling of very very close for a moment

191 INT: Mmm

192 P: that was the uncomfortable bit

193 INT: Hmm You mentioned that stemmed from a feeling of um what was the

194 word you used um feeling de-skilled

195 P: Yep

196 INT: um what was what was that about what were you feeling deskilled

197 about? Was that in the context of supervision or

198 P: No it was I don't really remember about that but I remember feeling

199 because he um my supervisor last year he would offer me quite a lot of

200 supervision so and he was very supportive I tended to over rely on that So that

201 maybe I don't remember feeling I don't remember much why I felt de-skilled

202 and I guess its more that you some periods I do feel de-skilled um but there

203 was a maybe he realised that I tended to over rely on the supervision instead of

204 being more independent maybe it was that I don't remember specifically to

205 give you some example. Maybe not maybe not to because its good as well to

206 you know when you don't have um that sometimes you have decide how you

207 are going to some interventions that you're going to do with some clients and

208 don't have always the chance to talk to your supervisor becau before that. But

209 because there was always a chance in that placement it's the setting as well

210 like that we've sat the same office so it was easy somehow to talk to to talk to

211 my supervisor so um I didn't have the chance somehow to feel more now I

212 have to find to be totally independent so maybe he under maybe he felt that it

213 was something going on there I was the only trainee as well there so I didn't

214 have other trainees and um yeah maybe that's why he addressed that I don't
215 remember exactly what was happening

216 INT: Ok well I guess in relation to you talked abit about your first or your last
217 supervisor last year and you've mentioned an element of power in your
218 supervisor this year

219 P: Yep

220 INT: Um can you tell me about your notions of power in supervision?

221 P: What is power?

222 INT: Mmm

223 P: I guess always there is a power dynamic a potential power dynamic there is
224 a power dynamic in terms of you have a supervisor and you're the supervisee
225 and the supervisor assess you as well for the university

226 INT: Mmm

227 P: So the supervisor assesses you directly anyway for this university and ah
228 we have the meeting visit as well. I don't know if you do have it. A tutor
229 comes to our placement they meet with the supervisor. We have a form to fill
230 in. I don't know if you have the same procedure. So they assess you directly
231 and they assess you indirectly as well anyway because they comment on your
232 work its that is a kind of ah not assessment but they guide your work somehow
233 they help you with your work. Um I don't know maybe when I saw your
234 research when I saw the theme of power to my mind it came when a
235 supervisor if we've had experience of a supervision this power dynamic in a
236 way that is ah that the person might use that somehow

237 INT: The superviso

238 P: Yeah because it is always there but ah I but it doesn't mean that the
239 supervisor will use will get at that always although it potentially is there

240 INT: Mmm

241 P: because they know that you are inexperienced at least less experienced than
242 them. You do, they're going to assess you so there is, there will be a power
243 dynamic. But when I decided to participate is that I felt that it's a kind of
244 divide that characteristic [laughs] in supervision

245 INT: Mmm

246 P: So that's why not in supervision that much of my supervisor it's a personal
247 issue I think so that's why it's what came to my mind in part when I read
248 power dynamic it's what came to my mind so something with a negative um
249 meaning a little bit of negative meaning came to my mind

250 INT: Ok

251 P: If I yeah answered to what you said what is the power for me in supervision

252 INT: Yeah. And so when you think about your reactions to my research
253 question and um what is it for you? What has been your experience of it?

254 P: Yes Me ah Me personally I don't I don't have a big problem with that with
255 the power dynamic with the power in supervision ah so it hasn't created
256 problems in my relationship with the supervisor but I do believe it is because I
257 consciously trying not to because I am aware of that ah the specific supervisor
258 of this year has the power dynamic complex maybe and uh does it make sense
259 in English 'complex' that ah it's an issue

260 INT: For him, or her

261 P: Her Her si. So I have sensed that somehow from the beginning so I took a
262 position that I would not challenge that. Which is annoying for me at times
263 and unnecessary if I could choose supervisor I wouldn't choose that. But on
264 the other hand I'm taking this position to actually to not create more problems
265 to me. So I adjusted somehow my behaviour in terms of not to become an
266 issue. So ok I know it's very confusing. INT: Oh no. I guess how did you sense
267 they had a power complex?

268 P: Hmm. This is the thing now that if I go at the beginning of my placement
269 this year and I'm trying to understand how did I sense that I cannot ex I do not
270 know if I can describe it very clearly. It's just a feeling that I got. For example,
271 um we started this placement. Three trainees from the university here. From
272 the same university so I I we are three I know the other two trainees. In that
273 placement there are more trainees but there are three from [participants'
274 university]. So although the supervisor I liked her from the beginning that's
275 why I chose to go on that placement its also about it's a placement it involves
276 working with children. And it it involves working with children who have
277 experienced domestic violence. And I am telling you that because I think its
278 interesting [laughs] what in what happened in supervision

279 INT: Ok

280 P: Um but ah so it was the only placement with children. So from the
281 beginning I ah did like her um. Actually I had two interviews. I liked more the
282 supervisor in the interview I had in the other placement but I decided to
283 choose this placement because I wanted to work with children. Also just to ell
284 you that I was aware from other from comments from previous trainees that
285 the supervision is a bit um the supervisor is a bit weird. I knew that. But I
286 didn't know of something more. So at the beginning of the placement she had
287 something um although she was very polite and very supportive you could say
288 she had something controlling in her behaviour. So whatever you I don't know
289 how to describe it but I remember coming here at the university and then
290 having group supervision and our supervisor here it was the first group
291 supervision session. So the supervisor here said ok asked each of us to talk
292 about the placement and the supervisor in placement just so you know at the
293 very beginning of the year. So the other trainees did say the supervisor is
294 lovely and she's very supportive and then I did say in the group actually its

295 very interesting because I'm scared of her. You are saying that she is very
296 supportive and lovely and I can understand why she's very supportive because
297 she is very supportive but there's something there that doesn't really there was
298 something fake if it makes sense [laughs]. I don't know how to say there's
299 something really pretending more that is everything fine. There is but I could
300 sense that if you challenged her or if she feels that you're challenging her she
301 can be very defensive and she can really use the power that she did has. It it
302 was there without knowing why. Later in the actually I think the reason that
303 the fact that I felt that from the beginning helped me to protect myself as well
304 because our relationship with the supervisor is very good. Because I don't
305 challenge her

306 INT: Mmm

307 P: but then things came up in placement, not so much with me, but someone,
308 with another trainee

309 INT: Mmm

310 P: which is funny and I there was several situations that she did use her power.
311 So for example, um, she was late. Lets say it's a very typical example. She
312 might be late in supervision

313 INT: Mmm

314 P: I feel a little bit worried [laughs] of disclosing all these things now to be
315 honest because I am still there. But anyway, she was late and um she's she's
316 always late, like ten minutes because she might ??? or might sit and chat with
317 other people it can be something like that. And then me I've never done her
318 anything but I'm trying to again I'm consciously trying to deal with the
319 situation in a very indirect way. So for example I would say hi you know I'm
320 going to the room and I'm waiting for you there. So she will come. But
321 another trainee challenged her and said well I'm quite annoyed because you're

322 late and instead of taking her responsibility. She did say I'm sorry

323 INT: Mmm

324 P: but then of course she was very defensive she became very defensive from I

325 learned and she was really and she started saying to the trainee that I realise I

326 sense that you are passive aggressive towards me and the trainee said actually

327 I'm not I'm annoyed because you were late ten fifteen minutes and this is

328 happening often

329 INT: Mmm

330 P: and then she said yeah I'm sorry I had to do all these things and she start ah

331 excusing herself somehow

332 INT: making excuses

333 P: yes but then ???? but actually she didn't because then she did say but I'm

334 wondering why you are passive aggressive towards me and she put all the

335 focus on the trainee

336 INT: Mmm

337 P: so its really using your power and this is really its its its for me its just

338 really using your power because um you know its not so much what you say

339 its how you say things

340 INT: Mmm

341 P: And how you behave in general

342 INT: Mmm

343 P: and um before you're and [laughs] it's a bit ridiculous this because another

344 situation happened. It was actually two weeks before I saw your research so

345 that's why I thought ok I will participate. There was um the supervisor said

346 that some of the trainees made some inappropriate comments about her in

347 front of other people . But she didn't want to address that with this particular

348 trainee so she wanted to address that with everybody. So she sent an email to

349 all of us and then in supervision we had to talk about it. So She was ah in my
350 supervision she was ok but she did say something along the lines [laughs] at
351 the end of the day I'm five years qualified counselling psychologist. Which is
352 a bit you know why are you saying that. Because I mean this is again a power
353 thing as well

354 INT: Mmm

355 P: because you wouldn't dare to say that if you didn't know that I'm a trainee
356 and its it was just so you know she just said that you know and me I didn't
357 care because she I I didn't take it personally but I can see why another trainee
358 might feel very intimidated me personally I didn't feel intimidated because I
359 feel ok quite ok with myself and I think with her we do have a balance with
360 the supervisor but still her comment was quite ah

361 INT: How did you experience it? What um what did it mean for you her
362 saying that? P: then its I'm more because I don't have so much um me because
363 I know how to how to adjust myself I don't create I don't make her defensive
364 so she treats she behaves to me in ok way. But when I'm hearing stories about
365 other comments that she does do with other trainees and the way in general
366 that she behaves and from what I'm sensing as well its just its just everything
367 about controlling power which I found particularly um. Its very interesting that
368 its happening in this setting which is about domestic violence as well which is
369 everything about controlling power

370 INT: Mmm

371 P: that's why I said that its interesting its just very interesting that its
372 happening in the setting where you work with people who have been in
373 situations with power dynamic and with control you know about domestic
374 violence. But ah the way that I experience her is that I just I'm just I need to
375 be careful how I'm going to say things. So in supervision I need to say ah

376 good point good point I need to make her feel that she's my supervisor that
377 she's there and I;m there, I need to make her feel like that.

378 INT: Ok so

379 P: in a very subtle way

380 INT: yeah

381 P: Its very subtle. Its not something really a situation that you can see and its
382 subtle. INT: So you in a subtle way consciously try to make her feel higher up
383 or more important or more um within her position as a supervisor

384 P: Yep yep

385 INT: and you do that to um to maintain a good relationship with her to

386 P: yes and not to put any trouble on myself because I have seen somehow its
387 not my characteristic of not being able to challenge somebody because but
388 with her I don't feel that challenging her is going to lead anywhere rather than
389 coming more trouble myself

390 INT: Mmm

391 P: You know

392 INT: And that's quite a strong reaction for you to feeling scared

393 P: at the beginning now I'm not I'm not but ah because I know how to deal
394 how to behave spontaneously I do it I;m a bit. I just adjust a little bit myself.
395 But having a very good experience in supervision and having that I can see the
396 difference somehow INT: Mmm

397 P: and um it can be simple things like as I said I have to say I need to say good
398 point and um I will challenge her but I need to do it very carefully. So for
399 example if I disagree. No for example if she says um about the clinical work.
400 She gives you an advice I cannot say well I don't think ??? its hard to phrase
401 it. If I say no no I don't think this can be useful I cannot say that but I might
402 say yes good idea but I'm thinking also that, you know. So it's good as well

403 somehow because it helps me it helps me being more diplomatic as well. Dip
404 dip
405 INT: Diplomatic yeah
406 P: Yeah it helps me be more diplomatic. But sometimes sometimes its tiring I
407 just feel a little bit annoyed and I think ok why it would be great if you had a
408 very open person that you could really um be even more yourself somehow if
409 it makes sense
410 INT: I guess you talk about your first supervisor
411 P: Yep
412 INT: you describe a sense of trust which
413 P: Yep
414 INT: enabled you to talk about you're your own feelings and
415 P: Mmm
416 INT: is that does that happen with this supervisor or is that less so or?
417 P: No I don't really feel that much trust and I don't trust her clinical opinion as
418 well because I can't believe that if a person its obvious for me ah because she
419 has great strengths she has some she has strengths as well and I can't I'm
420 trying to take from that she's very good in some things more practical things
421 about give a situation about therapy in assessments she's brilliant some very
422 good things. But when a person for me according to my opinion when
423 somebody particularly the supervisor who has been a therapist has so big thing
424 has so the issue of power is so important to them and un its something
425 unresolved their problem its an issue for her. It cannot for me this cannot be
426 totally separated from the therapist as well. So I would imagine this particular
427 supervisor as a therapist if has a very challenging client and aggressive client I
428 would imagine her being annoyed and somehow not reflecting that much on
429 her part I can imagine that. Because its like an open wound its like its so much

430 an issue for her that if you trigger this issue she just doesn't really see she just
431 doesn't she becomes very defensive. So for example I had a very challenging
432 child who his behaviour was quite abusive towards me which is quite actually
433 you you you um given that they have been ah he grew up in a very abusive
434 environment you expect that. So there was um he would shout at me he would
435 ah be very very abusive towards me very a very young child. Which was very
436 difficult for me. So the supervisor in general she was good in her she gave me
437 very good ah advice but there was a point that she got ah she got upset she got
438 annoyed with this child's behaviour towards me. So she did advise me to for
439 example tell him I think that your um she told me this child told me once um
440 you are a dummy and I felt of course awful because imagined that the whole
441 session was very really telling me that I'm stupid all these things I'm trying to
442 keep my stance and reflect on that. With the supervisor this supervisor also
443 suggest that but there was a moment in supervision that she somehow reacted
444 more spontaneously the supervisor and she did tell me well if it was me I
445 would say you called me dummy because you feel dummy and actually that
446 moment and the way that she did say that it was it it felt to me that is just
447 again this thing about power and about the issue of um nobody's going to
448 control me nobody's going to have the power of me so it was a bit defensive.
449 Ok I might say that but how useful is this going to be for the child if it will be
450 helpful to call him dummy. Can say maybe you feel you know it depends. And
451 again its not so much what she suggest to say it was her her way of saying
452 that. So what I'm trying to say now is that I do believe that when the
453 supervisor uses the power this doesn't this made me trust her less in her
454 clinical opinion as well. If it makes sense?
455 INT: Yes because she's using the power it makes you question
456 P: Yep

457 INT: her ability as a clinician

458 P: yeah and it's like so so an issue for the supervisor about the power thing

459 that she's using it.

460 INT: And power when you say power how she her use of power its about her

461 having control or being expert or?

462 P: Having control I think. If she thinks you challenge that if she doesn't feel

463 challenged she can be wonderful. But the point is that she you know you need

464 to be careful not to be seen anyway that she will feel challenged. Or a she

465 might have forgotten to have called parent to say that therapy is ending a

466 specific day

467 INT: Mmm

468 P: And instead of saying you forgot to do that or she you need to say we need

469 to you need to put it express it in a way that she will not feel defensive

470 INT: Mmm

471 P: And and ah she has said herself with other trainees that ah I have a thing

472 with power she has admitted that [laughs] she has said she has an issue with

473 power but in a way that I know it and I don't do anything about it so so you

474 know its just interesting for me to see that in this placement

475 INT: Mmm

476 P: to happen

477 INT: Mmm I guess I wondered um sort of leads onto my next question is in

478 what ways if any has being a Counselling Psychologist trainee influenced or

479 been influenced by these experiences?

480 P: Of power? Of power dynamics?

481 INT: Mmm

482 P: um also just to say that this power dynamic I have seen it in the university

483 as well its not just something with ???? I think it's a human characteristic

484 using the power but I wished that in this profession people need to be more
485 aware but even here sometimes they might um I for example am going to a
486 tutor's office and um its not supervision but he's going to be our supervisor
487 next year as well so it's kind of. And the way that he tried to make you open
488 up it's a bit patronizing it feels like it feels that they like so much to be in this
489 position of having of you being there as a trainee that they are going to support
490 you but they are going to support you because they have the power
491 [laughs]they are they are higher than you
492 INT: Mmm
493 P: so its not they support you because its not the support that we are I'm going
494 to support you in a more genuine way its I'm going to support you because
495 you need me to support you its this dynamic its sometimes um its more
496 unspoken obviously these things its how you feel with some people not with
497 everybody and some others no. My experience as a counselling as a trainee
498 INT: Mmm
499 P: is um that I believe I'm thinking about my future and I'm thinking when
500 I'm going to be a supervisor or when I'm going to if I'm going to be a
501 supervisor and I'm thinking its something that easily you can get in because its
502 easy its easier not to reflect on your part than to reflect on your part and I
503 guess its very easy the more experience you have its easier to get in that trap
504 of feeling that now of stopping reflecting that much and my my experience of
505 all these things is that I hope that I hope that I will use that as an example of
506 not becoming like that
507 INT: Mmm
508 P: me personally and um I don't if I'm becoming like that even with my
509 clients because the power dynamic is with our clients as well
510 INT: Mmm

511 P: or at least of trying to reflect on that because as I said I don't believe that if
512 you are like that as a supervisor to an extent you are going to be like that as a
513 therapist. You can not release its part of yourself somehow

514 INT: Mmm

515 P: so that means that when you don't have to reflect and when you can't skip
516 for that you just do it um and ah so I guess that I'm trying to use it all these
517 experiences in a positive way for me to be a good lesson for me to not to do it
518 as a therapist or as a potential supervisor with clients

519 INT: So its um a learning opportunity for you for how you want to conduct
520 yourself in the future

521 P: Yeah

522 INT: I wondered um about your position now as a trainee how that affects you

523 P: It affects sometimes um there is this some people say if if when you have
524 difficult supervisors you learn more. Me personally I don't believe that I
525 believe that when you have a supportive supervisor I personally open up more
526 and I I challenge myself even more then because I feel there is somehow safer
527 base to do it and then you explore more yourself and you open up more. So
528 there are times/styles that I feel that I'm losing as well from that

529 INT: Mmm

530 P: that if I had if I didn't that supervision if I had something better I would
531 gain more things. But again even now I'm trying to use it positively and think
532 trying to protect myself from that and um to trust more myself because also
533 um the sense that I got from the supervisor from the beginning eventually con
534 it was confirmed through associations and others trainees, not so much with
535 me

536 INT: Mmm

537 P: but so I so I I'm learning to trust more myself. I'm learning a lot of myself

538 I'm learning that I can adjust myself easily with people which is good and bad,
539 because on the other end it left me feeling and what about my anger about this
540 things happening
541 INT: Mmm mmm
542 P: so there are you know there is anxiety provoking at times. When there was
543 this situation happening although it didn't influence me personally in
544 supervision when I learn that other particular trainee has a huge problem with
545 his supervisor because of the power dynamic
546 INT: Mmm
547 P: and yes um and although it not has to do it doesn't have to do with me still
548 it has an impact on me as well.
549 INT: You witness it
550 P: Yeah definite anxious very anxious about how can I trust this supervisor
551 maybe one day she might feel challenged by me as well you know so which
552 yeah so its anxiety provoking as well
553 INT: Mmm
554 P: And then I'm trying to find other kind of support peer supervision is very
556 supportive as well so I'm trying somehow to um use to deal with that
557 somehow to handle with that and it has good things
558 INT: Mmm
559 P: because there are good things
560 INT: Mmm
561 P: and I cannot be always like him maybe last year it happened to have very
562 good supervision. Many trainees didn't have last year, Last year many trainees
563 use to say other problems that I didn't have with supervision and I couldn't
564 understand it
565 INT: Mmm

566 P: because for me I didn't have a bad experience. Now it's not bad but its its it
567 has both elements um so yeah I'm kind of um more yeah its its I'm trying to
568 see it as an experience and ah deal with my anxiety and take the good things
569 because as I said she has some she has some very good skills as a person as a
570 supervisor which is good to see and um take them. I was a bit worried at the
571 beginning because I was reading some articles about supervision being
572 internalised in your work with clients [laughs] and I was thinking oh my god if
573 this power thing internalised to me so I was trying constantly to think ok lets
574 keep the good things and leave the bad things something like that
575 INT: Mmm
576 P: I'm trying to do that
577 INT: Ok Would you say, do you have any power in supervision?
578 P: I do have yeah I don't fit totally and actually the finer I adjust myself and
579 eventually I don't have any problem is a powerful thing there is power
580 because somehow um because me I would say what I want to say I would
581 never step back I wouldn't protect myself maybe that's why with me she's
582 also so good because there is a balance coz I don't challenge her in a bad way
583 but I will challenge her I would put my boundaries I will say for example she
584 tried to organise the clients and she she wanted to put many clients in a day
585 this is another thing which I found me personally not very good and it didn't
586 happen it didn't really it felt that I was not it wouldn't be a collaborative
587 decision. And it made me feel angry but so I knew I couldn't express the anger
588 because then we could clash how you say
589 INT: Clash
590 P: have an argument clash and I could feel that this will not lead anywhere
591 with this supervisor because some supervisors I think maybe if you express
592 your anger they can take it and you can move on with her I didn't feel it would

593 happen that so I would challenge I would put my boundaries but I would put it
594 another way so for example using again the power thing [laughs] I would say
595 it was true actually but I didn't express the other I expressed the half thing
596 INT: Mmm

597 P: My anxiety about that so I put her in a position of having to support me
598 [laughs] somehow

599 INT: Mmm

600 P: this is a powerful thing is a manipulative thing but it's a protect to protect
601 myself as well

602 INT: Protect yourself from?

603 P: Because she wanted to do something that I felt I couldn't handle to have so
604 many clients in a day lets for example. And so this made me feel very angry
605 because um the way that it happened it was like that she will decide for me
606 let's say how many clients I'm going to have so I had to put in the boundaries
607 I had to do that to respect my limits and also to protect myself in ah with my
608 you know how much I can handle. What did you ask me sorry?

609 INT: I guess I what protection made so protecting yourself from not doing too
610 much or not being overwhelmed

611 P: Yeah yeah yeah like for example having three clients plus supervision in a
612 day I think its enough I don't want to have four clients plus supervision in
613 seven hours

614 INT: Mmm

615 P: and write some notes and everything you know. So it was to have a fourth
616 client plus supervision in a day um because she couldn't organise to start to
617 put them in my second day because she's very good very bad in organising
618 things so she was um I didn't I she was still trying to find there was some
619 problems I hadn't started the second day and I was pushing and my tutors was

620 pushing that she had to put some clients for me on second day and it took her
621 ages to do that and then she wanted to put them in the same day which it felt
622 for me too much having all these things because that means that I will have
623 again to write my notes at home many things
624 INT: Mmm
625 P: and also very difficult to work with children who have these behaviours I
626 found it extremely emotionally overwhelming so I it was I felt it was ok three
627 clients plus supervision so when it happened that I was angry because she
628 knew that I was already fully packed that day
629 INT: Mmm
630 P: um so I had to if I was totally honest I would express my anger and my
631 anxiety but somehow I couldn't be totally honest so I expressed my anxiety
632 and then immediately she got in that position of having to support me so
633 admittedly at the end it happened what I want to happened because I put my
634 boundaries and I expressed that I cannot handle that but in a way that she
635 didn't feel defensive if it makes sense
636 INT: So for in order for you to receive support from her of regarding your
637 anxiety
638 P: Yep
639 INT: um you didn't express your feelings of anger
640 P: Yes
641 INT: Right ok
642 P: Exactly so it was again protecting myself yeah to but as you say there is
643 power you asked me before if I do have power
644 INT: Mmm
645 P: I perceive that as of having power as well because in another way not
646 because I don't want to have power but its I want to just have my boundaries

647 just this for myself its more its not so much to have power to use the power
648 but its having the power for myself not ah not you know not to use it in terms
649 of somebody else
650 INT: Mmm
651 P: So yeah
652 INT: Ok. Um we've been reflecting on supervision and notions of power I
653 asked you a few questions before um I was wondering if there was any other
654 elements that you'd like to talk about. Um being a woman, or your age, or
655 your ethnicity or um coming from this institution. If anything like that um is
656 has a relevance to what we've been talking about?
657 P: I though ah there was there is a dynamic that is relevant the age and gender
658 I think INT: Mmm
659 P: No I'm not sure but I thought about that. Because I um the supervisor is
660 relatively young so and she's a woman. We are all trainees woman and in
661 almost its we're not all the same age but its not that big difference so I was
662 wondering if this has to do with all this dynamic in general. Um I don't know
663 if it's I thought about although last year my supervisor was a man and was
664 older which still many people would say this can be for many people from
665 what I know there is this power dynamic as well between man and a woman
666 me I didn't experience that so I I just said many things together what what I if
667 I put them in order I just want to say although last year it was not another man
668 and ah maybe he was more mature I don't know and then because he was my
669 supervisor now he she's 30 he was 60 so of course he has more experience and
670 maybe that's why. But then I thought on the other hand many people and
671 especially woman have commented on the power dynamic between make and
672 female so its not what I'm saying that for its my experience
673 INT: Mmm

674 P: Um so yeah I don't know maybe maybe many people would say that ah
675 usually its between the male and femal dynamic although me I thought that
676 maybe the fact that she's female and she's young
677 INT: Mmm
678 P: maybe there's more competition there I thought about it its not I haven't felt
679 something like that. But when I was trying when I you know when I had all
680 this thinking about when this situation happened with the misunderstanding
681 and some comments that she the supervisor was annoyed and she said she
682 talked with all of us
683 INT: Mmm
684 P: it felt a little bit like we are now all young here young woman who are
685 arguing [laughs] a little bit it felt a little bit like yeah who said that for me and
686 all those things it felt a little bit like that. Which maybe has to do more with
687 the age though then the then the gender maybe it feels like we are very close in
688 the age .
689 INT: And what do you think about that? What is it about that?
690 P: Its when you are very close in the age, maybe. Maybe things feel. this
691 competition. Me personally I don't feel like that. The only thing I can take
692 from this is to learn more. Umm, and I wish that I would feel more
693 competition, that meant that I would have more idea in my mind than I have
694 here. Umm, its just one of the thoughts that I do have, without having anything
695 to indicate that. That because we are this close to our age, it feels more
696 competitive, more, that there is use of power. Although maybe if she was 50,
697 is the age as well that, maybe its my assumption. (Laughs) I am using a lot of
698 maybe's now.
699 INT: Would there be a difference for you? If um, she was older or...
700 P: Its this assumption that when someone is older, they have more experience.

701 Because of the age, and more mature usually. But then on the other hand, if I
702 think of Greek tutors or something like that, because in Greece there is this,
703 the age difference, more important than in the UK, the older they are the more
704 they use the power. You have to respect them because they're old. So... it
705 doesn't mean that if she wasn't older she wouldn't use that, I don't know I
706 don't know.

707 INT: That experience, are you talking in terms of clinical experience? Or life
708 experience, or something else?

709 P: Its about Greece, its more in general, in the whole culture.

710 INT: Ok.

711 P: So you never say... um, its depends on the language as well. So if you say,
712 about this courses. The way that you talk, you never say, never call a Greek
713 older person by the first name, you just never do that. You might know the
714 person for years, if its your tutor, you would say 'Mr' and the first name, or
715 'Mr' and the surname. If you want to call them with the first name, again you
716 say Mr or Mrs or Miss, we have a word for everything in Greek. So you never
717 say the first name, for me this indicates a power dynamic as well. So it's a,
718 there is this general assumption in our culture that the older they are, the
719 people, you have to respect them anyway cos they're old, and show your
720 respect for them.

721 INT: Mmm, and in the UK context, in terms of your clinical work, would that
722 be...

723 P: An issue you mean?

724 INT: Yeah. How would you relate that, talking about Greek culture and UK
725 Counselling Psychology, sort of culture, for you?

726 P: In relation to the clients, or with..

727 INT: Or with supervisors?

728 P: With the age you mean?

729 INT: Mmm.

730 P: Given that I'm Greek, I carry that with me, and so that's, when I used to
731 come here, and there was a (cant hear what she says here), I used to call him
732 Mr Ricardo because, and he did say to me 'We don't say...' because he's
733 Italian and they have this in Italy too. So he did say to me 'We don't say here,
734 Mr Ricardo, we say Ricardo' and I couldn't even say it, it felt disrespectful to
735 me. This is other names. But its like, um, in the essence I have this assumption
736 that maybe, the older the person, the more experience there be, I guess not that
737 much, but, in some ways I would respect them in terms of having more
738 experience.

739 INT: Mmm

740 P: Not that I would respect less somebody but a a good example is that I didn't
741 want to have a young therapist because I didn't feel that I would be able to to
742 trust them somehow. Because I wouldn't [laughs] this is interesting because I
743 just wanting my therapist I wanted to be more than fortyfive

744 INT: Mmm

745 P: Just to feel me to feel that I that they would have experience

746 INT: Mmm

747 P: Which they might not. My therapist might maybe she had her training when
748 she was forty

749 INT: Mmm

750 P: But that I I remember going to meet a therapist some therapists at the
751 beginning and I met a therapist and from the first moment I thought well I'm
752 not going to come again with this therapist because she's very young

753 INT: Mmm

754 P: So its ah maybe its ah I'm carrying that as well.

755 INT: How does that translate into your supervision experience? Has that been
756 important in that context?

757 P: It's a good question because I have never felt it about that. But I guess it is
758 because um even from the beginning when I had to choose which placement I
759 was going to take. I was going to choose between this one that I am now and
760 another one. The fact that she was 30 years old which is a realistic as well it
761 made feel a little bit well the most experience that she might have is just five
762 years. Although somebody as a supervisor I thought a supervisor who has 50
763 or 20 years experience probably is going to be more experienced at least

764 INT: Mmm

765 P: so there was a thought about it. But in practice its not something that I'm
766 aware of happening although that we are talking about it I'm thinking that
767 maybe there is there as well that. If she was wonderful if I didn't have the
768 whole things I think I wouldn't think ah she's wonderful but she's too young

768 INT: Mmm

770 P: But given all the things and that she's young and yeah at the end of the day
771 its not that she has very many years experience. It's feels a little bit um you
772 know that I don't know maybe that um probably if someone was more
773 experienced I would ah trust more.

774 INT: Mmm. Ok. Um is there anything else you would like to say before we
775 finish?

776 P: Not really. No not really. I think it's fine, I don't know if you want to ask if
777 it was enough what I did say?

778 INT: Yeah that's that's all I have to ask so

779 P: Ah because I can talk about many things but I don't know I don't want to
780 go to ah to say I'm trying to remain on the topic somehow

781 INT: Mmm, yep.

APPENDIX F

TRANSCRIPT – ‘CONNIE’

- 1 INT: Ok so first question I would like to ask is can you describe for me how
2 you've found your experience of supervision in your development as a
3 counselling psychologist?
- 4 P: Um helpful?
- 5 INT: Helpful or unhelpful, challenging or beneficial
- 6 P: Helpful and challenging and sometimes daunting um for me um it takes a
7 lot of thinking and reflecting to to be able to use the sessions in a beneficial.
8 So the way the sessions are conducted um its not you cant see how it's
9 beneficial you cant see its value straight away sometimes because there
10 difficult feelings so sometimes I needed to go to give myself some time at
11 home or wherever to reflect and then think yeah there was a point there I
12 should improve here or you know because at times they were kind of daunting
- 13 INT: What do you mean by daunting?
- 14 P: um I mean um it didn't I didn't feel that we were equal me and the
15 supervisor. It felt um that the supervisor um has more knowledge than me and
16 the way things were said or communicated had an element of this of this lack
17 of equality.
- 18 INT: Can you tell me more?
- 19 P: Um yeah. For example, its when the supervisor says um mmm when the
20 supervisor is testing you. So what theory and asks what theory are you
21 following, what is approach, how do you do this approach, um so by this
22 questions I find this questions daunting sometimes because when I I try to
23 bring the client in my mind and reflect and I feel like a restriction and like a
24 test and a challenge. And also even sometimes saying this is not right,
25 commenting on my work and judging it, this is not right what you did, you are

26 taking sides I remember the supervisor said or sometimes she even said its
27 untherapeutic what you do. So I found these words very daunting, and I was
28 thinking this is the opposite of you know, maybe that person is trying to help
29 but the way that she does it is not um the way it should be I think so that we
30 feel equal and we have a sort of um warm and um you know relax a warmed
31 and relaxed atmosphere in which you can reflect other than feeling judged. So
32 these are eexperiences that I found um daunting and unfair and kind of
33 opposite to the goals of therapy in supervision

34 INT: What do you see as the goal of supervision?

35 P: I see I see supervision as um a similar setting to therapy um because
36 confidentiality has to be kept and there has to be mutual respect and
37 understanding. And I feel the client is disclosing themselves to me and I try
38 and do my best so that they feel comfortable enough and not judged by me and
39 I feel the supervisors provide the same um qualities should try with me or with
40 the supervisee to kind of achieve this way of being in the supervision. Because
41 what my client brings to me with so much effort I bring to the supervisor in
42 order to help the client. So if I'm not if I'm judged if I feel judged them I'm
43 not free to communicate all that I feel the client wont be helped. I wont be that
44 damaged because I'm not in a very vulnerable position there I'm just
45 communicating the client's stuff mostly. But the client wont be helped out of
46 all that. So that's how I see I see it should work. I mean if it would work like
47 that I think it would be beneficial um but not when ah the difference in when
48 the difference you know is evidenced, when they're saying to you we're on a
49 different level I feel that not helps in the same if doesn't help the clients when
50 you take the role of the expert and say well tell me but you know I know more.
51 In that way because it doesn't foster warm um yeah environment and there's
52 no like free association

53 INT: Mmm

54 P: So I felt many times I felt after different supervisors um for the one of them

55 I never prepare um and when I go in the supervision um everything comes to

56 my mind. Because I'm free and I'm feeling accepted there and comfortable

57 and everything comes to my mind then I feel very much in touch with my real

58 self and whats going on with the client

59 INT: Mmm

60 P: In the other supervision shs um session the other type I my mind doesn't

61 work so I go in I'm blank

62 INT: Mmm

63 P: I can't say anything about the client because I feel this kind of resistance

64 from the supervisors part. Its not really resistance its like I don't really know

65 what it is I feel she's going to judge me

66 INT: Mmm

67 P: So I started preparing and writing things down so I remember them and that

68 helps me

69 INT: Mmm

70 P: But it's a completely different experience and in terms of my development I

71 definitely appreciate the first one

72 INT: Mmm. What is the impact on you when um you feel judged in

73 supervision?

74 P: Um it has quite a strong impact on me. I feel a lot of different things. I feel

75 afraid, intimidated, ah I feel I'm judging myself and kind of beating myself up,

76 feeling not competent enough, feeling a bit stupid as well

77 INT: Mmm

78 P: Um there is this anxiety I have this anxiety that you know what I'm saying

79 is not going to make sense and when the person that is in front of me is sort of

80 gazing at me in a kind of puzzled not puzzled like I cant describe it its like ok
81 get on with it or I'm not even listening this when I have the lack of um respect
82 I guess because its my issue my anxiety becomes very high that I wont make
83 sense and that my client you know what I do with the client doesn't make
84 sense and all that

85 INT: Mmm

86 P: So that's why I said it's the opposite of ther of, it doesn't serve its goal in a
87 way this kind of supervision because I feel the way my clients shouldn't feel. I
88 feel judged and I can't articulate what I want to say

89 INT: Mmm

90 P: But I try to see it in a more wide way um. Recently I started thinking well
91 you will say what you have to say and then you can't really control the other
92 person's reaction or its fine its just um its just an opinion you will still go on
93 and say what you want to say and I find recently that its not that bad and
94 sometimes I go home and reflect and find some good parts um in the critique
95 of the supervisor. But yeah it needs I guess extra effort and it needs and you
96 need to be stronger and to accept that you know this person will judge you you
97 wont like their manner but but ah I do feel that we shouldn't be through that
98 anyway

99 INT: Mmm. So its ah an experience that happens and its um it seems to not
100 enable you to talk about your clients

101 P: Mmm

102 INT: And to not feel open to talk about

103 P: Yeah. I feel um the opposite of open I feel stuck like um and when I didn't
104 write things down in the beginning I really didn't have I didn't know what to
105 say and I focussed on some details I felt I said relevant stuff. They may not
106 have been relevant but they were treated as irrelevant anyway. But yeah it

107 helps now that I see its different things on paper. And its amazing how in the
108 other supervision, first when I enter the room I think oh god I don't remember,
109 it's been a while and I didn't take notes and when I sit down it all comes to
110 mind like a movie

111 INT: Mmm

112 P: And I remember every aspect not every but a lot of the moments

113 INT: Mmm

114 P: with a client

115 INT: Mmm. What do you make of that difference between those two different
116 experiences of supervision, what is it, why..

117 P: Yeah I think one supervisor is ah quite intimidated by different opinions
118 and the supervisor that doesn't facilitate the openness I mean um quite
119 judgemental, quite fixed in her ways and in her opinions and quite feels the
120 power and the difference between us. So the other one feels more equal feels
121 more like a person to person thing where we both explore and we try to help
122 the client and ourselves to develop you know

123 INT: Mmm

124 P: and with the other I don't this block between us um the block is when
125 people are to obsessed with their power and their um status that this is when
126 they can't be open and human because they kind of see their image and where
127 they are and for them that plays an important role or they try to prove it
128 because they are unsure

129 INT: Mmm

130 P: of themselves so they try to prove their power

131 INT: Mmm

132 P: And it's sometimes yeah its helping actually to reflect on that because some
133 that person that I say that she I don't feel open with her she. She doesn't do

134 anything in particular apart from the um times that she said what I do is
135 untherapeutic and that I take sides but this were a few times. I guess it's more
136 an attitude um that she has. She sits quite low in the chair she's very relaxed
137 and sometimes she eats and she looks at you like you say something
138 unimportant. And even though she's psychodynamic she actually stops you so
139 you start talking and within one or two minutes she stops you and says ok lets
140 make it clear this is a defense so she feels this need to put labels on everything
141 you do when you go on more than she would want you to she kind of looks
142 bored and she says ok sometimes she even says that's a bit irrelevant let's
143 focus now. I don't know how to describe it she wants she wants to label things
144 and have the power to say this is this this is that and deoesn't um allow you to
145 go on and on and describe your experience
146 INT: Mmm. When you say doesn't allow
147 P: Because um she can show you with her attitude that you you ramble now
148 it's enough its so she actually stops you um through actual language or body
149 language but she does stop you and um it feels like she can't see the whole
150 picture um because I believe the experience is very unique of every person and
151 of the interaction in therapy
152 INT: Mmm
153 P: So sometimes she describes something as ok this is acting out the client is
154 messing around is messing about ok what are you going to do about that. And
155 I'm thinking I don't know what I'm going to do I don't want to do anything. I
156 just want to share it you know and see all the aspects ok the acting out is one
157 aspect but what else is there so that's what I mean that she actually stops and
158 doesn't allow. Its, I guess it's the opposite of what Rogers describes as you
159 know the acceptance and that you are there to listen to the other person and
160 not interrupt them at least at the very least I don't know

161 INT: Mmm That sense of being accepted and trusting that's important for you
162 in order to to free associate to formulate your ideas

163 P: Yes its very important. Yeah now that I say that I realise but um yeah it
164 actually shouldn't be like that I mean um we should be able to not for clients
165 for counsellors but we should be able I guess to say what we want to say
166 regardless of the other person's reactions um but still you um you reveal a
167 vulnerable side of yourself in a way you expose yourself and your work and
168 you have to see you all this has to happen in a quite safe environment
169 otherwise I don't know

170 INT: Mmm

171 P: I experience it like that

172 INT: Mmm

173 P: Yeah

174 INT: And these two different supervisors the differences between them are as
175 two individuals it seems or

176 P: What are the differences as individuals?

177 INT: Yeah I guess I wondered how you understood what would make their
178 way of being have a certain reaction for you and other's way of being has a
179 P: Mmm

180 INT: different reaction for you?

181 P: Um yes the one that I am more happy about is she's doing a lot of active
182 listening she's giving a lot of space she never she rarely interrupts um she's
183 actually looking in a um her eye contact is quite um close and I mean there is
184 eye contact first of all and it feels warm and it feels like it feels like you wont
185 be judged even if you did the worst mistake. And it feels like that because she
186 doesn't bomba bombard you with comments all the time so she's not very

187 keen um on proving her power all the time by throwing intellectual comments
188 she will let you say what you have to say and then she will say but I think for
189 example or another way you could see that or so everything is like an
190 alternative so she first she values what you're saying and she presents what
191 she says as an alternative she doesn't present it as a correction whereas the
192 other one can say ah this is wrong she can actually say this is wrong and for
193 example the client will take the power if you do that or the client will use you
194 so you have to show this and this and so it feels more like an not an order um
195 prescription
196 INT: Mmm
197 P: about what to do and sometimes it it is quite hard on you its like I expected
198 you to do this whereas the other is yes a suggestion or an alternative and it
199 can be a challenge but she will let you I guess its very humanistic that's what
200 it is but it's the best I mean the best humanistic example I've ever seen um and
201 its not like they say about humanistic that she doesn't talk or she nods ah she
202 can actually help you challenge yourself in a very subtle way um I did think
203 oh yeah actually that was my stuff and I was for example. And I was putting
204 that on the client through her comments. A lot of times I had an insight and
205 feeling very safe and very calm about the way its it was being done
206 INT: Mmm
207 P: in the other one I managed to have some insight in the other case but after I
208 was very angry and very um upset first
209 INT: Mmm
210 P: So I don't know maybe there are different personalities um but for me the
211 difference is that one is more accepting to herself the other one is struggling
212 with some power and um kind of issues of sense of self or even narcissism or I
213 don't know

214 INT: I'd like to move onto the next question which is um can you tell me
215 about notions of power in supervision?

216 P: Um I associate power with proving one's worth proving one's abilities with
217 the um need with a need and the yeah and sometimes it can become an
218 obsession to prove one's abilities and worth um um I don't believe in power in
219 general I believe we don't have power over our lives and I believe some things
220 are luck pure luck or destiny or I don't know or God or whatever um um and I
221 and I think in supervision and in other um situations when we feel sure not
222 really sure but when we feel ok with ourselves then the element of power is
223 less there. I guess I'm going around and I can't really um. If I was to give a
224 definition of power I couldn't. It's really I have to think

225 INT: Yeah

226 P: Um its like I have an image in my mind more than I associate it with
227 something bad mm with man kind of with manipulation yeah when a person is
228 powerful um I feel people who have others things in their lives don't care
229 about power that much about being able yeah so everything of power is able to
230 control things and define certain situations and manipulate it's the ability to
231 have a say that counts you know all that which um I guess people need that but
232 the people who need it more are the people who are less developed for me and
233 in supervision um I think supervisors who haven't worked with themselves as
234 much and as therapists they need to impose this kind of power on you so they
235 feel important so that they feel they control situations they control what is
236 being said um they have the last word they say the last word their way of
237 seeing things is better all that I associate with power in supervision. And I feel
238 its when they're more narcissitic then average and they feel that they are not
239 good enough as what they are so they have to prove that they are good by you
240 know through um not making others but through kind of seeing others in a

241 lower position then they are

242 INT: Mmm

243 P: So I guess power is about um feeling superior and better and being able to

244 control and in supervision um yeah I think what I described that um not giving

245 the space to talk and express the supervisee's emotions um and all that for me

246 is associated with power because it its control its like saying to you I decide I

247 kind of decide when you start talking when you stop talking and I have the last

248 word and I'm the experienced one my view my view's what counts not yours

249 INT: Mmm

250 P: So the opposite of intersubjectivity [laughs]

251 INT: Mmm, and would it be right to say if I summarise what you've said is

252 that um part of why supervisors may do that be because of some sort of

253 insecurity in themselves

254 P: Yeah

255 INT: on not working on themselves in a way to

256 P: Definitely

257 INT: Yep

258 P: I don't know if I can um I mean I haven't studied much on that it's a

259 personal view that um yeah their need for power comes from this um because

260 it's not like strength where you want to be strong to cope in your life you

261 know to be strong enough to cope. Power is something different, it's the

262 ability to control so yeah I think it comes from a deep insecurity

263 INT: Mmm. Ultimately a negative thing? If you're on the receiving end?

264 P: Mmm I would say yes but I don't know I might be very dogmatic or moral

265 here or even religious but I I would see that this should be the ultimate goal in

266 life for one to have power. I would see other things as more you know

267 fulfilling things to achieve.

268 INT: Mmm. I wondered whether um in the context of supervision whether
269 power is something that um is only possessed by supervisors?
270 P: Is it sorry?
271 INT: Is it onl possessed by supervisors?
272 P: um in some supervision sessions yeah its only possessed by supervisors.
273 And for me that that inequality constructs the word power whereas if you are
274 equal so you have the strength to have your say and to communicate meanings
275 and construct meanings together then no none of these people have the power.
276 They might put both strong and you know secure or good enough but then for
277 me power power has to do with the inequality so if I have the power you don't
278 and supervision supervisors will use power or who um yeah who strive for
279 power that's how they try to get it I guess by um removing it from someone
280 else
281 INT: Mmm
282 P: Yeah that's the way I see it.
283 INT: What makes a sense of inequality in your experience of supervision?
284 P: Um its an attitude for me. Its arrogance. Lack of interest in other people's
285 opinions. Lack of active listening um its like when you let the person talk you
286 don't really look interested giving them the message that ok stop now and then
287 as soon as they stop you start talking in a very authoritative way implying
288 what you say is true and what the other person said was just um something
289 unimportant. Yes I guess it's a kind of authoritarian attitude and style and of
290 course comments that can make the other person doubt what they say is for me
291 is the opposite of a dialogue. Of a proper dialogue where you are thirsty and
292 curious to hear what the other person says it's the opposite of that it's a
293 dismissing attitude. And its always and I think power is always implied is
294 never um is never managed um not never I don't know sometimes it can

295 happen in ah with in on a verbal level as well. So by saying what you said is
296 not relevant or by judging the other person. But I think most of the times it
297 happens in an unspoken level. But yeah I've heard other people saying that
298 you know their supervisors told them you should you are supposed to do that
299 and this is how we work. So I can guess it can be about diminishing the other
300 make the other person feel um useless sometimes if no matter what they say
301 you say to them that's not good enough that's crap or you know it can so it can
302 be on a verbal level too

303 INT: Mmm

304 P: But I found it more difficult I found it more difficult when its on an
305 unspoken level. Because I don't know how to react to that because you can't
306 confront the other person then you can't say well what you said doesn't really
307 help me its it makes it more complicated for me

308 INT: Less able to as you said confront it or to

309 P: Yeah

310 INT: challenge it.

311 P: And I don't know maybe its because it makes me more angry I don't know.

312 Yeah its difficult. But um I hate the attitude in my life in general I mean

313 people who have attitude and arrogance so um yeah [laughs]

314 INT: So we began talking about a sense of inequality and um you described a
315 sense of power residing in the individual in terms of their attitude or

316 P: Yeah, yeah. And I believe that the power cannot be shared if a person who
317 has the power they don't want to share it and this is the meaning of power. Its
318 not like I have some knowledge and I want to share it for if I have some
319 knowledge but I'm looking for power then I wont share this knowledge so for
320 me it's the opposite of sharing and giving is just keeping for myself for my
321 image you know. Ego satisfaction or something

322 INT: Can I ask um in what ways if any has being a trainee counselling
323 psychologist influenced or been influenced by your experiences of
324 supervision?

325 P: So how being a trainee psychologist is

326 INT: Has um ah influenced these experiences you've been talking about?

327 P: In supervision?

328 INT: Yeah, or perhaps the other way round how have those experiences

329 P: Ok

330 INT: shaped you as a trainee

331 P: Um yeah it works both ways for me, I mean it happens both ways. Being a
332 trainee is very anxiety provoking um and there is a lot of power because when
333 you go to the university it feels that you are powerless because there are
334 people who have the knowledge and the expertise and basically you are there
335 to be taught, so that has an element of powerlessness um so it can add up to
336 the feeling of powerlessness from the supervision it makes it and make it even
337 worse. Um yeah because they are said uncertainties more you know I guess if
338 you are in supervision as um qualified person its different because you feel um
339 yeah you are a more complete professional

340 INT: Mmm, in what sense?

341 P: Yeah that's a good question [laughs] um because you are not in training
342 anymore and there's something about training its not its not that you don't
343 know anything and after three years you know everything that wouldn't that
344 would be ridiculous but um yeah even the word training like somebody trains
345 you so you are um incomplete

346 INT: Mmm

347 P: Um yeah because there are people who know and teach you and you don't
348 know yet that's how it feels its not really its not real but I guess it's the

349 institution not a particular institution but the educational institutions that
350 inspire this kind of um feeling

351 INT: Mmm

352 P: Because there's not a dialogue where both people can construct their
353 meanings it's the teacher and the pupil so it feels the role of ah student is it has
354 a powerlessness

355 INT: Mmm. And in the context of supervision what is it like?

356 P: Yeah so you go to supervision as a student and that mmm its like you're not
357 on a you're not on a steady ground and your ground can be easily shaken
358 because you carry the uncertainty from the fact that you're still a trainee. And
359 if the supervisor kind of imposes things on you or uses or abuses power then it
360 feels even more um scary I guess

361 INT: Mmm. It makes me thinking about think about um when you talk about
362 that supervisor who you experienced as having having power um cutting you
363 short and not feeling you could open up things with that person and um I
364 wondered how you reacted to that situation? And I wonder how being a
365 trainee

366 P: Yeah

367 INT: affected how you reacted?

368 P: Yeah it played I think the biggest role being a trainee

369 INT: Mmm

370 P: I reacted um I became quite submissive and quiet and I was left with a lot
371 of anger

372 INT: Mmm

373 P: but then I sort of confronted her latter on um yes and I I think if I wasn't a
374 trainee she wouldn't have spoken in the same way and I wouldn't have to stop
375 I mean to shut up and listen to her. If I was a professional like her I would say

376 well you are wrong you know I find what you I don't agree with what you say.
377 So there is this inequality that they can say if they agree or if they don't but
378 you can't because you're a trainee um
379 INT: Because you are a trainee you can't can't cant take a position or can't
380 um?
381 P: Not really because they can tell you well you don't you are you are here to
382 learn and you know I know more it's basically this I know more underlying
383 um under implied all the time and yeah
384 INT: No more about?
385 P: Theory or yeah experience but its not that there will still be a gap in the
386 experience but I guess when you finish your training um it is it is like it is
387 implied that now you're prepared now you are ready you are still in the
388 process of knowledge but of um knowing but you are more ready
389 INT: Mmm
390 P: So yeah
391 INT: That's the impression you've you've got
392 P: Yeah
393 INT: What do you think?
394 P: What's the impression I've got?
395 INT: or um is that your opinion or?
396 P: No it isn't but it is um like a social kind of stereotype or I don't know yes
397 and it's a role as well so sometimes in life you are not who you are but you are
398 your role this is how I think society functions and so you step into a role of
399 trainee. Yeah I guess you could say you opinion and you can put your position
400 you can position yourself but um maybe it's the uncertainty then I don't know
401 it can be like a a bo a two ways thing
402 INT: Mmm two ways what do you mean?

403 P: The role stepping into the role of a trainee um lead to certain behaviour I
404 lost it I had it but then I lost it. I guess its like you don't know um is it the
405 uncertainty that you feel anyway that leads you to act as a trainee or is it
406 because you take that role because you are in training and then by playing that
407 role you are in an uncertain position. I don't know which causes the other I
408 guess

409 INT: Mmm

410 P: but I guess it can go both ways

411 INT: I see

412 P: Bec I guess the uncertainty will be there even when a person finishes their
413 training but maybe you feel more empowered [laughs]

414 INT: Mmm

415 P: after you finish the training you know you complete you you are not a
416 student

417 INT: Mmm I guess I was thinking about so in those contexts with um a
418 supervisor that you feel has power you can react in a submissive or withdrawn
419 or feel angry

420 P: Mmm yeah yeah that's true

421 INT: And what impact does that have an impact on your practice?

422 P: I try to forget all about it and not um I feel when its me and the client in the
423 room its like a different world and I try to keep it like that. When I'm not
424 satisfied and I'm not helped through supervision I try and remove from my
425 mind all the influence that that had

426 INT: Mmm

427 P: Um yeah so I try not to let it play any role at all because if I let it it will
428 make me I will feel you know not so good about myself and this will affect the
429 work. And it does affect it in a sense when sometimes if I feel quite not so

430 confident I don't talk as much and I don't come out in the session so um the
431 client does more talking and it sort of becomes very humanistic in a bad way
432 um you know I I listen and I'm there
433 INT: Mmm
434 P: But I don't offer as much I don't give as much. That's how I react when I'm
435 not confident.
436 INT: Ok
437 P: Or I might react um but this more rare for me by saying by trying to
438 rationalise things with a client rather than helping them experience what they
439 say
440 INT: Mmm
441 P: but trying to give answers in a way to save the client and things like that
442 INT: Ok. Um I guess the last thing is I asked you earlier about just a few
443 things um and I wondered whether things such as your age or your gender or
444 ethnicity um or training institution have had any impact or any influences on
445 your experiences of supervision?
446 P: Mmm. Um My gender yeah I feel they all play a role um I feel being
447 younger um then my supervisor and being training to have a doctorate whereas
448 she is a therapist and being a woman as she is can create a certain um can
449 inspire a competitive competitiveness I guess, competition
450 INT: For you or for her or?
451 P: Um for both but I guess the way she handles with that the way she deals
452 with that is to try to prove her power or to try and get and have power
453 INT: Mmm
454 P: Um for me yeah maybe when I feel so angry and intimidated its its because
455 I compare myself maybe its because I have underneath there is this
456 competition element

457 INT: Mmm

458 P: But I wouldn't um but I can but I feel I can handle it

459 INT: Mmm

460 P: In different ways. In better ways than her. But I'm not sure if it plays a

461 definite role but um several times she has when we talk about the client and

462 we are 28 she says young people they are acting out or something like that so

463 in her eyes maybe I'm a bit young so she has to be the expert. And she has got

464 quite a few problems with the training. She believes psychodynamic training is

465 the best. She believes in that. She's not so open to other things to other you

466 know because as a counselling psychologist you are open to a lot of theories

467 but for her it's mostly that the psychodynamic

468 INT: Mmm

469 P: yeah

470 INT: It sounds like a difference between the two of you then is

471 P: Yeah. Yes there is. And she is um from a I don't know she is not white sort

472 of Europe, she's white but she's not of European or American. I don't know

473 what role that might play. I think she's from Middle east or something.

474 INT: Is there anything else that you would like to um after reflecting on power

475 and supervision?

476 P: Mmm I would like to say that it can be tricky and

477 INT: To talk about it or?

478 P: [laughs]

479 INT: Or the experience of it?

480 P: Both

481 INT: Mmm

482 P: Um and what I said that you know ok there are certain people that I defined

483 before that have a need for power I can't be excluded from that um. It does

484 feel nice. But for me, I mean the power
485 INT: Mmm
486 P: Yeah and I guess it's tricky because when you're angry um with somebody
487 imposing their power its easy to say um I don't want the power but they do so
488 therefore I'm angry but there is something more than that. It's maybe um
489 unexpressed need for power or unconscious
490 INT: Mmm
491 P: Yeah
492 P: In the people that become angry I mean like me
493 INT: Mmm
494 P: or frustrated
495 INT: Mmm. Um, well if there is nothing else you would like to say that's all I
496 have to ask so
497 P: Ok
498 INT: Thanks very much
499 P: You're welcome

APPENDIX G

TRANSCRIPT – ‘DIANE’

1 INT: Ok so first question I would like to ask is can you describe for me how
2 you have found your experience of supervision in your development as a
3 Counselling Psychologist?

4 P: Um you know I've had mixed experiences but I suppose if I start from my
5 first year um as a trainee I think my experience wasn't that great of a
6 supervisor um and that kind of made me a lot more cautious in terms of
7 dealing with with other supervisors um. I guess I've had some very good
8 supervisors and some who who were less good I could say in terms of keeping
9 boundaries and um I spose abusing their power

10 INT: Mmm

11 P: Um I guess I don't know if it would be helpful if I explained to you that sort
12 of things that went on

13 INT: Yeah

14 P: in the first year and why I didn't find it particularly helpful. Um this was a
15 clinical psychologist that I had um And it was a male supervisor who I guess
16 had years of experience in the field that I was working um and when I first
17 started the placement everything was fine um I guess the weirdness of the
18 whole relationship started when I went for an interview and he asked me a few
19 personal questions which I was a bit taken a back by but I just decided not to I
20 guess it was such a grey area I wasn't really sure what you know maybe he
21 just has to ask it. Um but then I guess I was quite you know not very

22 experienced and didn't know and I really wanted the placement so I went for it

23 INT: Mmm

24 P: And after a while after a couple of months everything was fine but there
25 were moments in supervision when I could sense that something weird was
26 going on um in terms of um him perhaps saying things that were a bit

27 inappropriate

28 INT: Mmm

29 P: Um by that I mean not sexual I mean in a sexual way but not explicitly but I

30 could just sense something um until one day when he I suppose called my

31 house from his own from his house and invited me out for a suppose to go out

32 on a theatre. And I I basically said no um and I came up with an excuse as to

33 why I wouldn't. But I guess I didn't really have the courage to say to him that

34 actually this is not very appropriate um If I mean just yeah I'm trying to think

35 what would have happened if I had went out with him

36 INT: Mmm

37 P: and the stuff that would come up and the way that he would relate to me in

38 supervision and I wouldn't really see him as my supervisor. I would just see

39 him as a friend or I don't know and so after that experience I would say that

40 that's when yeah difficulties came up in the relationship more and in terms of

41 the way that he acted around me and also I suppose to some extent impacted

42 upon the way I you know I was quite not scared but I was quite intimidated by

43 him because again you know he was my supervisor, he was going to give me

44 an evaluation

45 INT: Mmm

46 P: He had to pass my placement so it was a bit of a difficult situation and that

47 was my very first experience of um supervision also with a male

48 INT: Mmm

49 P: um supervisor so I guess yeah and then till after this experience I um I was

50 quite cautious around him. And he was just come up. And I made a few

51 mistakes in terms of administration stuff um you know to either typing

52 attendance or nn attendance on the clients on RIO making mistakes like that.

53 And it used to piss him off um you know people do make mistakes but I think

54 I understand that I went maybe I was getting really stressed around the whole
55 situation. So he um he actually started getting really um in some ways he just
56 switched like from being a very nice person to well I thought he was very
57 friendly to this really um mean um person who um would just dismiss
58 things I would say in supervision. He would just be very cold and and not very
59 pleasant to be around in supervision. And at various points he said that um he
60 was thinking whether I would even be suitable um for this placement and
61 INT: Mmm

62 P: That was because I had by accident um I suppose these were a few mistakes
63 that I did but I I guess if I want to go really sort of psychodynamic um it
64 may've been I was so bloody anxious around him

65 INT: Mmm

66 P: the whole time [sigh] that I kept making these mistakes and and I think I
67 don't on his part whether he felt rejected and wanted somehow to get back. So
68 the whole dynamic changed and that's when I felt that actually he you know
69 first of all I thought he abused his power by the first you know place when he
70 asked such an inappropriate question. On the other hand when coz I did
71 disclose this to my tutor at [participants university]

72 INT: Mmm

73 P: And she said that you know its such a grey area even that because even if
74 you go further with it then he's going to say but you know I just asked you a
75 question it was it wasn't anything I couldn't really prove it in any way either

76 INT: Mmm

77 P: So um after that he just said I had by accident yeah this is what I was trying
78 to get at I did on um two occasions um misplaced clients. So I I think I said to
79 a client at 12 and I remember I was away for an interview that day and the

80 client had turned up and I just had for some really again reason just mixed up
81 the hours and that was then day when he just completely went bezerk and said
82 actually you know um I was thinking of not giving you your hours and um
83 INT: Mmm
84 P: you know just just I suppose playing I knew somewhere deep down that he
85 wouldn't do it but it was just the dynamics and the supervision and and the
86 way that yeah he threatened me not to he did in the end but the whole thing
87 turned out to be just a nightmare
88 INT: Mmm. What was that like for you I mean you talked about um it
89 affecting you how you would you would forget things and feel nervous and
90 P: Yeah
91 INT: um and attempting talking to a tutor at uni for advice about it
92 P: Yeah
93 INT: How did you feel in that whole process?
94 P: You mean throughout the process of
95 INT: Mmm
96 P: I felt very vulnerable and it made me feel so shit about myself and my
97 clinical work as well I guess he never had any problems but he did say that he
98 didn't have any problems with my clinical work but its just I felt like um I felt
99 quite just he treated me with no respect basically
100 INT: Mmm
101 P: um and I mean today now that I can kind of reflect back and think about it I
102 realise you know in some ways amusing to picture the whole situation and um
103 think well ok maybe that was a sign that ok maybe he did feel rejected after all
104 and that's probably what happened um but then he did as I say I guess there
105 was a real power imbalance in the relationship and to overstep your
106 boundaries I think is he did that

107 INT: Mmm

108 P: And this has let me I suppose to be very cautious with male supervisors in
109 general

110 INT: Mmm

111 P: Um if they ask me a question I don't disclose about myself I mean if it's
112 inappropriate then I say look I just I don't think that's relevant to to what I'm
113 going to do here at this placement

114 INT: Ahmm

115 P: So its I guess made me a lot more cautious and I try to be assertive if a male
116 so I suppose when yeah I'm having a real problem with males and um yeah
117 males in positions of power

118 INT: I guess I'm conscious of in this

119 P: Yeah

120 INT: in this role as well

121 P: Yeah that's true [laughs]

122 INT: Um um ok so its so it has had some lasting affect for you in terms of how
123 you feel around other male supervisors you feel more protected or more
124 protective or reserved or

125 P: Yes yeah definitely um yeah very um and I just I don't know I mean it
126 depends but on the person too but I'm especially if I suppose this may sound a
127 bit weird but yes heterosexual men that's when I feel really intimidated um
128 because then I just automatically think that something you know that they may
129 do something or say something that may be inappropriate

130 INT: Mmm. I wonder how that's how this experience has affected your work
131 as a counselling psychologist? Say for example you talked about not
132 disclosing anything about yourself and um

133 P: Mmm

134 INT: has that had any impact on the way that supervision has unfolded or how
135 you

136 P: You mean with supervisors or? Oh not with clients you mean?

137 INT: Well I guess um your experiences with a supervisor not disclosing has
138 that impacted on the way that supervision has unfolded which may have then
139 impacted your work? Or your sense of self I suppose

140 P: Yeah the thing is I right now at the moment I only have one male supervisor
141 but with him it's a different dynamic like I don't I don't sense that he would I
142 guess I don't know if its I can say that he isn't interested in women so he's I
143 guess a homosexual male so with him there is I can just be myself I don't feel
144 any kind of tension or anything like that so I just feel very free in the
145 relationship. I think it was a conscious decision to even choose him as my
146 supervisor. First because I thought he was very good and second because I just
147 I felt I??? Who may potentially be and I I realised that I there's that fear within
148 me that I realised that its um I'm generalising as well because not all males
149 will be that way um and then the rest of my supervisors are females and that
150 was a conscious decision as well. My personal therapist is a woman I just yeah

151 INT: Mmm

152 P: For me its kind of dangerous I guess maybe I'm taking it too extreme but I
153 think that that experience just

154 INT: Mmm

155 P: And my first year was enough not to do anything about it.

156 INT: So how did that unfold um you've talked about seeking advice about it
157 and how it impacted on you

158 P: Mmhmm

159 INT: um feeling like its made you more nervous impacted on you with
160 remembering things sometimes and um a sense of a shift in him after that of

161 um switching and being quite quite punitive maybe at times

162 P: Mmm very that's that's the word I suppose. He was very punishing. I guess

163 he was trying to punish me. Um you know very he was a very narisisitc person

164 so it was he just couldn't take the fact that I said no now that I think about it.

165 Um yeah sorry what was your

166 INT: Um well I guess I wondered how you managed that but I Sppose you've

167 already said that in a way in terms of you um sort of almost acted in a

168 protective way of yourself um until the end of that relationship until the end of

169 that placement or?

170 P: You mean how I was in supervision sessions with him

171 INT: Mmm

172 P: Yeah I was very protective of myself I tried to yeah be very protected and

173 just when I went in would discuss clients and I mean not that I ever discussed

174 anything else with him but it was I guess my mistake I have to say though that

175 part of this whole dynamic maybe I mean not that I should in some ways I'm

176 thinking perhaps I sent some maybe he just got my communication in a wrong

177 way I was quite I was very sort of relational and I wanted to kind of use

178 myself in supervision and I wonder whether that could of just because he was

179 a clinical psychologist very CBT I mean he was not into the he wasn't very

180 much into the relationship um I mean he was but not saying that clinical

181 psychologists aren't but it was I don't know whether on some unconscious

182 level I was sending cues and which led him to think that maybe I was

183 interested or um but yeah after that I was not trying to be relational at all so

184 that was just yeah you know just very go over my notes and discuss the clients

185 and and came out. I had my personal therapist as well so I did have people that

186 supported me through this process

187 INT: Mmm

188 P: but it was kind of it was a real damaging experience I would say

189 INT: Mmm. That um attempts at a way of being or a way of working as a

190 relational style which you initially had with him

191 P: Mmm Mmm

192 INT: um what made you sense that he that he didn't sort of gel with that or

193 that he wasn't able to work in that way?

194 P: Because he said it himself that he's not very you know he's not into this

195 touchy feeliness or or yeah it wasn't just his statement. He said that this is a

196 CBT placement and very clinically focussed and I was I suppose in my first

197 year and I wasn't very much into CBT I was more into the humanistic um

198 model and I mean yeah he didn't have any problems with it but I think we

199 were just very different as well. Um

200 INT: As two individuals or in terms of different backgrounds

201 P: Definitely well different backgrounds, different individuals and favouring

202 different models I suppose.

203 INT: You talked about being in the first year um which leads into my question

204 which was in terms of in what ways has training as a counselling psychologist

205 P: Sorry?

206 INT: In what ways has being a trainee counselling psychologist um influenced

207 or been influenced by experiences such as that um?

208 P: You mean how has this experience shaped me into the way in as a

209 counselling psychologist? Um I suppose it's made me also reflect on the way

210 that on myself and how I um can improve this um I suppose to look more at

211 myself and see how I can make myself come across I suppose in a to be more

212 assertive but I suppose it's also made me reflect on the way that I relate to my

213 male clients um and I'm very aware of that

214 INT: Could you say more?

215 P: Yeah I guess the way that I suppose my but you see its very different
216 because in that relationship these men are not in a position of power you know
217 its kind of reversed role so I guess I don't necessarily feel the same fear um
218 but I guess I'm still aware of my own predjudices and yeah um being with a
219 male in the room who may you know its never really happened it may have
220 happened unconsciously in their heads but not I haven't been able to deal with
221 any of that. I think I would be able to work with that
222 INT: Mmm
223 P: in the room but yeah I guess I'm not sure whether I answered your question
224 in terms of how this experience has shaped me. I mean I guess its made me
225 more conscious
226 INT: Mmm
227 P: um yeah could you I don't know what specific..
228 INT: Um I guess um as a trainee being a trainee how that has either influenced
229 those experiences and vise versa in terms of, say for example, you talked
230 about it being your first placement in your first year and um would have things
231 been different if it was your third year or
232 P: Mmm mmm
233 INT: you had been qualified
234 P: Mmm. Oh definitely. I think so. I think in my first year I was very
235 vulnerable very um inexperienced I didn't have that much maybe knowledge
236 that I have today. And I think I would deal with it in a different way definitely
237 I would have a bit more confidence to to approach him differently. And maybe
238 this would have never happened, maybe this dynamic wouldn't have
239 happened.
240 INT: Mmm
241 P: um but you know in some ways I remember when this happened it sort of in

242 some ways shattered my whole idea of, because I I guess and this is a very
243 naïve view to have that because you're a psychologist or a counselling or
244 clinical psychologist you would never do something like that. So when I was
245 in my first year I thought, I was just devastated because I
246 INT: Mmm
247 P: I thought how could someone do that because well the other thing was that
248 he had quite a lot of information about me well I suppose he knew that I'm a
249 foreign student so my family's not here and I'm here on my own so he he
250 knew that as well so you know I suppose useful information for him
251 INT: Mmm
252 P: Um and I just I found that quite I felt betrayed
253 INT: Mmm
254 P: Um yeah very betrayed. And also I couldn't believe that someone who is in
255 this profession would would be able to abuse their power like that but this has
256 just completely changed my view of
257 INT: Mmm
258 P: You know actually its opened up my eyes and I think that in every
259 traumatic experience or in every bad situation you can find something good in
260 it good positive experience And I've definitely learnt a lot
261 INT: Mmm
262 P: from this one experience just in itself
263 INT: Mmm
264 P: but yeah
265 INT: sorry go on
266 P: No
267 INT: I guess I wondered you talked about um you have more knowledge if it
268 would make it more different ???

269 P: Um I guess I was referring to theoretical models perhaps of um yeah
270 theoretical knowledge in terms of um understanding the relationship in terms
271 of you know when when he reacted the way he did I didn't understand that
272 was a sign of rejection but I suppose being able to be more analytic about
273 what's the relationship and understanding why he why he did the things that he
274 did.

275 INT: Mmm

276 P: Because at the time I took it so personal and I couldn't understand why he
277 did that there must be something wrong with me. I maybe yeah quite I suppose
278 I was an easy target and. But now that I look back I just I think if it was today
279 I would really handle it differently

280 INT: Mmm...I guess I feel quite moved by it really

281 P: Mmm

282 INT: Um because it does sound like a very difficult experience especially in
283 your first year

284 P: Mmm mmm

285 INT: So I'm aware of for me treating you with respect

286 P: Mmm

287 INT: and to tread carefully um but as you say you've as time's gone on you've
288 gained some perspective on it and sort of thought about it in different ways
289 and

290 P: Yeah I guess you know the other thing was yes I did but it was it was very
291 hard and I remember in my very last I suppose yeah final year in my first year
292 when I finished you know everything was done I was going to start my second
293 year and they were going to allocate supervisors research supervisors

294 INT: Mmm

295 P: And they sent me an email um it was a male supervisor [laughs] and I was

296 not very happy about that um I wanted I just it was like I cannot why did they
297 do this like I really don't need it I want a female supervisor. So that was just
298 although it was a research supervisor its still I just I couldn't
299 INT: Mmm
300 P: although yeah he's still my research supervisor but then again I'm always
301 on guard
302 INT: Mmm
303 P: Um and so
304 INT: And did that they they did change it for you or?
305 P: No well I didn't say anything I was just but my tutor who knew about my
306 circumstances said look if you feel that you're not you know finding??? You
307 can always change. But I felt that he was good and as long as I go in there and
308 I'm very you know professional and just do what I have to do and but it's still
309 hard I can't relax, its, I'm very guarded.
310 INT: Mmm. So yeah I guess you've talked about that experience and you
311 initially started out with saying you've had some mixed experiences. What've
312 your other experiences of supervision been like?
313 P: Yeah I was going to go onto that. Um I did have another horrific experience
314 with another female supervisor that I feel very strongly about
315 INT: Mmm
316 P: But yeah I can tell you about my my other supervisors that I've had um one
317 two three supervisors who have been amazing they've just been phenomenal.
318 One is the male supervisor and the other two were um I had one of them last
319 year an external supervisor a counselling psychologist. And then I have an
320 analytic psychotherapist at the moment which is their all three amazing . Um
321 the only bad experience is that I would say I had was with this male supervisor
322 and with another female supervisor. Do you want me to tell you about them?

323 INT: Before we talk about that other bad experience I wondered if we could
324 explore your supervision experiences more generally

325 P: Ok

326 INT: Um in um when you talked about that first supervisor how that's affected
327 you're your way of being in supervision and um

328 P: Mmm

329 INT: practice to??? an extent and how have you you know you use the words
330 phenomenal for those others supervisors. Could you explain what that
331 phenomenal experience is?

332 P: I just felt the supervisor that I had last year which was an external
333 counselling psychologist was she was just very um I liked her humanity um
334 and she I could just I could be myself in there um and she was quite relational
335 and I wasn't threatened by her um well I think partly because of the dynamic
336 she was a female but

337 INT: Something to do with her being a counselling psychologist have an
338 influence do you think or?

339 P: Possibly I mean she was a counselling but her history was also clinical so
340 she had both um could yeah I think her way of practising was different from
341 him and also she was quite psychodynamic and they were very different so it
342 was and and the way that she kind of created this nourished um yeah nurturing
343 environment um and she was very you know I suppose congruent in the
344 relationship very honest

345 INT: Mmm

346 P: Yeah. But I think that a lot of it had to do well the fact I mean I explicitly
347 went for a female supervisor I wasn't working with males

348 INT: Mmm

349 P: Um but then again yeah then my other analytic supervisor is she's also very

350 nurturing and I don't feel like she's out there to get me or
351 INT: Mmm
352 P: Um but then maybe in my world phenomenal [laugh] means you know
353 maybe because I have been through quite a bit and if someone is nice or there
354 just
355 INT: Not not attacking you
356 P: Yeah not attacking them that is great. But maybe they're just you know
357 decent human beings [laughs]
358 INT: Mmm
359 P: Um so've had one two three supervisors yeah
360 INT: Can I ask that um that experience of being nurtured and um being able to
361 be yourself and relax a bit more I wondered if that had any impact on your on
362 supervision and on your practice?
363 P: It did because in some strange way it made me be less attacking of myself
364 or less punishing of myself um. And I suppose it made me I guess it had I
365 could see the way that they were in supervision and in some ways I could
366 internalise them as a good object
367 INT: Mmm How are you feeling?
368 P: Um
369 INT: In talking about this?
370 P: I feel fine talking about it. It doesn't I don't really I mean it makes me
371 realise what what I've been through but um I think its good to talk about it I
372 think that's one reason why I wanted to take part in this study because I felt
373 like in some ways it could empower me be more therapeutic
374 INT: Mmm, ok. Um maybe you would like to talk about that other experience
375 then
376 P: Yeah [laugh] that one is a more recent well that was in my second um that

377 one I have really strong feelings um about this was a supervisor that I had as at
378 an older adult placement and I I started that placement thinking that it was an
379 existential um kind of humanistic placement and that's when she said that you
380 know that these were a lot of older adults um and you know they deal with a
381 lot of loss and bereavements and you know you could do a lot of well you
382 could do existential work with them. Sometimes psychodynamic um I wasn't
383 very much into CBT so that's why I went for the placement but she did say
384 that you know at times you would be able to do some CBT as well

385 INT: Mmm

386 P: So I thought ok its more of a kind if integrative so I'll go for that um and so
387 after I suppose I started I realised that actually it's not very existential its not
388 very humanistic and I was fine doing the CBT um but it was it wasn't really
389 what I had expected and it was a 6 month contract on that placement. Now this
390 was a I suppose she was quite young well I mean I would say she was in her
391 probably mid thirties or something she has recently well she or maybe a bit
392 older she had graduated not very long ago um so she was quite new in the field
393 and and I guess she hadn't done the doctorate it was the independent route or
394 something like that ah which I now when I reflect I don't know if that had a
395 play in it but um she basically so yeah I started working with clients and at
396 first I had two case loads and then three and then throughout the middle of of
397 the kind of term I said to her that when he hit summer when we came close to
398 summer I said to her I'm going to go back to my home country for the summer
399 but I will be finishing obviously I had my I had only contracted twelve
400 sessions with these clients so obviously I would have ended with them

402 INT: Mmm

403 P: and then came back taken another case load and then finished and then I
404 would not come back to the placement. So she I guess for her that wasn't um

405 she she said you know I remember in supervision she said yeah that's fine.
406 However, a month later when I went to go in to hand in my supervisor
407 evaluation form um she said that she wasn't able to coz [her university] has
408 these forms where you put satisfactory or unsatisfactory and then you don't I
409 mean obviously no-one ever gets unsatisfactory I haven't heard of that unless
410 you're a completely just don't know what you're doing um but anyways and
411 then obviously have to explain why you're putting unsatisfactory so um yeah
412 so I handed that to her and she um she said that she wasn't able to comment on
413 some of these because I haven't been at the placement for very long oh and I
414 forgot I once had a client who who I was quite psychodynamic for the first
415 initial session and apparently I mean she never said that to me um the client
416 she was a a person who had worked in the NHS herself she's an old lady in
417 her like late sixties and apparently she had called I don't know if it was my
418 supervisor or my supervisors colleague saying that she didn't really find the
419 initial session helpful hopeful I suppose.

420 INT: Mmm

421 P: and I mean I I didn't take that as a complaint I just thought thought ok well
422 this could be you know something that we could work I mean definitely we can
423 address this in in the relationship we can talk about this and a lot of the times
425 clients don't feel very good after the initial session um there's a lot of
426 ambivalence um and also I you know I reflected on my own intervention and I
427 thought well ok and that's what supervision is for to be able for the supervisor
428 to advise me and supervise me on on things where places where I go wrong

429 INT: Mmm

430 P: And she said to me that you know this was in the this was when my first
431 kind of experience with her started um she was saying how um I've had a
432 complaint I remember one morning I went into supervision and she was very

433 sneaky about it she was like how did you feel with this client and I said as I I
434 was very honest I said you it was a difficult session and this is how I felt I felt
435 quite uncomfortable um and she was like ok well that's interesting that you
436 say because this client has complained. I mean she didn't say that to me before
437 and she just tried to get information from me and then say this is what and I
438 said complain I mean what complaint and she basically said well she hasn't
439 found it helpful or hopeful and I said well that's something that we could I
440 thought that we could discuss this in supervision like

440 INT: Mmm

441 P: lets look at that and um so she kept that in the back of her mind I suppose
442 and um when the client came obviously I guess to cut a long story short I I
443 was managed to we had a very good relationship in the end

444 INT: Mmm

445 P: And um and and that I suppose sorry my mind um so she didn't say
446 anything after that and I realised that all these clients that I've taken on board
447 I'm not really doing any kind of its more CBT work which I wasn't very
448 happy about but then I did and at times I would you know in my way of
449 working I was quite psychodynamic

450 INT: Mmm

451 P: and she had a problem with that she said you you're not very CBT and um
452 you know you need to be able to work on that

453 INT: Mmm

454 P: You have a difficulty in switching and we did talk about that in supervision.
455 So when I um handed in my evaluation form she said that she wasn't able to
456 comment on on a few things and that she wouldn't be able to because I hadn't
457 been I was at the placement for three months basically and I I had about
458 twenty hours but that was my second placement I had another placement as

459 well. And so she wasn't able to comment anything on that and she called up
460 the university and and said that told the university a different account to what I
461 had said to her about my terminating

462 INT: Mmm

463 P: saying that [participant's name] wants to prematurely end the placement. So
464 my tutor at the university just called me in I mean this whole experience and
465 said that apparently I've had a serious client complaint and that I want to end
466 the placement prematurely and I was just shocked I said

467 INT: Mmm

468 P: what was this complaint it was in my world that wasn't a complaint that
469 was just and you know

470 INT: and it was earlier as well

471 P: Sorry

472 INT: this had happened a few months earlier they didn't express that

473 P: yeah a few weeks I mean wasn't even nothing press and then so she's and
474 the tutor's just I felt attacked by the tutor as well and she wasn't willingly to
475 hear my side of the story at all so what happened was that they she kept
476 communicating with my tutor and another time I received an email form my
477 tutor saying that I've had another complaint! I was just you know at that stage I
478 I just didn't know what to do what I was psychologically not in a very good
479 place. So I said I went in and she said you've apparently a client has
480 complained about your dress code. And that just that made it I mean I'd had
481 enough at that stage I said ok so a client complained about my dress I just have
482 a hard time believing that because I felt that this supervisor may have either
483 made it up I know it sounds crazy but it was just and even if that was the case
484 that could have been worked through in therapy. I was never I never dress
485 inappropriately never dress provocative or I just wouldn't do that. And and she

486 was just so I went back to her and I said I feel very strongly about what you've
487 done you've called up the university without my consent you don't even tell
488 me and tell them what is this like

489 INT: Mmm

490 P: She said you and I said if you ever had any diff problems with my dress
491 code why did you not say anything and she said well you need to be
492 professional enough to realise that yourself. So the whole thing and I suppose
493 I'm not from this country and I I don't know I think a lot of the times dress
494 code is quite important here. I think one time I wore jeans in the NHS I didn't
495 know you were susp you weren't supposed to do that

496 INT: Mmm

497 P: I guess what she had a problem with was I had I wear stockings and I had a
498 dress and I had a whole in my stocking and that happens you know when you
499 wear stock [laugh] so up and apparently the client and I was working at an
500 older adult placement so its you know it's a different generation

501 INT: Mmm

502 P: she probably thought I was young girl who I don't know it was just her own
503 prejudice as well but

504 INT: Mmm

505 P: I I don't see any you know I could have worked with that in therapy and
506 this whole thing was just these two things were turned against me and she
507 called up the university and basically she ended up failing my hours, she
508 didn't give me my hours and um I remember at the time I just I can't really
509 explain to you how how angry I was

510 INT: Mmm

511 P: because I felt that I don't deserve that I I hadn't you know I hadn't done
512 anything unethical

513 INT: Mmm

514 P: um and and I sometimes wonder whether and I remember in the very last

515 day when I said to her do you realise how hard I worked here I travelled three

516 hours to get here to this placement. I've worked my clients always turn up

517 which is not a bad sign

518 INT: Mmm

519 P: Um and I have a good enough relationship with them. I don't understand

520 why you want to fail my hours. And I'll never forget that minute when she

521 laughed sheliterally

522 INT: She laughed

523 P: She literally she laughed in my face and she said um she said you have

524 travelled so far but you just haven't fulfilled um what I expected of you. Um

525 you know that to me is an abuse of power because at that point and you see the

526 thing is I couldn't stand up for myself because I felt so victimised and

527 cornered both by her and by my other tutor at the university who had no I

528 suppose no realisation of she was a new tutor as well

529 INT: Mmm

530 P: so she didn't know what was going on and and I just two people in such

531 position of power that would just throw me back and forth as a little you know

532 just and get such I felt really worthless I was like this this is I felt so shit about

533 myself, about my work. This impacted my coursework and it it has it's left its

534 scars and I don't trust people in the position of authority anymore

535 INT: Mmm

536 P: Um now its not about male supervisors [laughs] anymore its actually about

537 young female supervisors who may not be I mean I don't know if there was

538 any kind of female rivalry going on in that relationship

539 INT: Mmm

540 P: The fact that she wasn't doing a doctorate I don't know whether that
541 INT: Mmm
542 P: You know I don't want to sound too cocky but these things could have
543 INT: Mmm
544 P: had a play in this whole um relationship
545 INT: What do you think about that um her being younger or not doing or not
546 done a doctorate? I mean when you say it may have had an impact what do
547 you mean?
548 P: In that I suppose she that she doesn't I mean it sounds that she doesn't have
549 a doctorate basically and maybe that in some ways was pissing off I don't
550 know
551 INT: Mmm
552 P: I'm just trying to think she was young um I and it may have been a
553 personality clash as well because when I I mean I did I was I felt I talked to
554 the head of department about this and she said sometimes you know there can
555 be a personality clash between supervisee and supervisors. Um and I think
556 that's what was going on there as well you know to call up the university and
557 talk about my dress code I'm probably one of the least people who would ever
558 dress in an inappropriate way. I just don't do that um it was just unfortunate
559 that on that specific day I happened to have a whole in my [laughs]
560 INT: Mmm
561 P: It wasn't a big hole anyways but
562 INT: Mmm
563 P: But um so when you know it was just because this experience let me it
564 completely ruined my whole summer because my tutor basically said you have
565 a failed placement we're going to have to take do further investigation! I mean
566 I just [laughs]

567 INT: Mmm

568 P: You know it was like this is really what are you guys doing this is
569 completely mad

570 INT: Mmm

571 P: Um further investigation into what you know that she was going to talk to
572 my supervisor and one thing that just was its beyond belief was that she when
573 she she had no legitimate justification for why she wanted to fail me so when
574 she filled out the supervisory evaluation form she only put unsatisfactory on
575 two areas and the rest were left blank and my argument was why don't you
576 confidently just circle around unsatisfactory on all of them because apparently
577 you think I'm just shit so you have the audacity to fail my hours for stupid
578 reasons yet you can't even comment on the form and say that this person is
579 rubbish then go ahead and do it um and she never did

580 INT: It sounds like you um you did make a few attempts to fight your corner
581 in a way to confront her, am I perceiving it right did..?

582 P: No I didn't I was scared I was so scared because she called up the
583 university and I thought I just don't want to make a big deal out of this which
584 was a very big mistake. Again if it was today I would just take that evaluation
585 form and give it to her manager. I mean like can she please circle
586 unsatisfactory because you you know that fact that she that to me is is is
587 wrong its she was clearly abusing her power by Oh I'll I'm just going to
588 decide not to give you your hours I'm going to play games with you in the
589 supervision sessions. And bare in mind that she never explicitly had any
590 problems she would Ok I may have difficulty in switching from
591 psychodynamic to CBT that doesn't mean I'm shit at CBT and

592 INT: Mmm

593 P: She always she would always nod her head in sessions I remember she'd be
594 like oh good excellent you're doing some work and then in the last day just go
595 that beszerk and mental that to me was just
596 INT: Mmm
597 P: it kind of made me think that sometimes there are people in this profession
598 who shouldn't really be practising to be honest
599 INT: Mmm
600 P: And I was quite concerned I was like she, and the the way that she laughed
601 at me and um and then this whole experience led me to so I went home for the
602 summer um I left for Sweden and that basically meant that I was short of
603 hours and I had to fly the university was going to make me so you see no-one
604 really believed the university believed her
605 INT: Mmm
606 P: so they thought it was utter crap. And I mean I had other my other
607 supervisors were on my side and obviously coz I filed a formal complaint
608 against this whole situation. And that was me being very assertive I suppose
609 INT: Mmm
610 P: I'd just had enough like it was not reflective of who I was and
611 INT: Mmm
612 P: they never gave me back my hours but they gave me an extension. Now
613 what happened was that I went when I went to Sweden um um basically they
614 said we don't care you have to come here once a week to get your clients from
615 your other placement and that was just like I couldn't [laughs] I can't tell you
616 how angry that I was because ok do you realise how much it's going to cost
617 me and even if I come I don't know if you know my clients may fell sick and I
618 may have one client and fly all the way from Sw
619 INT: Mmm

620 P: yes its not ten it doesn't take ten hours but yes it does take all day to fly
621 back and forth

622 INT: Mmm

623 P: So I was basically and a lot of things throughout that stage I I failed one of
624 my courseworks because of all these you know I wasn't myself um and I also
625 think that all these things that happened to me were a consequence of the first
626 year. My bad experience with whatever happened.

627 INT: How do you mean?

628 P: You know the experience I had with my supervisor in the first year um
629 because that it was throughout the end of my first year and I'd just started the
630 second year so I was desperate to find a placement and I got this one um with
631 this horrific supervisor so it just and the university even had decided to give an
632 extension after the compliant I'd filed because I think maybe they saw a
633 different side to what was really what went on

634 INT: Mmm

635 P: and they couldn't really they didn't give me my hours but that you know I
636 was under so much pressure for a while to get my twenty hours that she
637 basically failed the hours that I needed

638 INT: Mmm

639 P: and um I think this last experience made me I guess it doesn't really matter
640 anymore if its yes I'll be very careful I'm not going to explicitly go after male
641 supervisors but actually I will be really careful about I'll check you know I'll
642 check there backgrounds and how old they are [laughs] how much experience
643 are they doctors or are they I mean its pathetic but that's just Its not pathetic
644 but it that's..

645 INT: So seeking those things to as a way of trying to prevent any future
646 difficulties future problems?

647 P: Yes yep but I think you know this experience has shaped me um into a very
648 I suppose I can't deny it the scars are still there and I do talk about it a lot in
649 therapy and um my therapist actually did we're going to do some EMDR in
650 therapy because but that wasn't just because of this supervision but for a lot of
651 other stuff that went on as a result of the courseworks and um it clearly had a
652 real impact on me and again you know I just its made me even this year I
653 wasn't able to open up with my supervisors because I would think and this led
654 me to be very harsh on myself you know in my work with clients and in terms
655 of my interventions sometimes I think they're utter crap and and my
656 supervisor now he's just yeah he's very nurturing and and my other female
657 supervisor they're both older as well so that I think that is important to me
658 INT: Mmm. I was going to ask I asked a few sort of demographic questions
659 earlier
660 P: Yeah
661 INT: Um and yeah we talked about the sex of the supervisor or the gender of
662 the supervisor ??? but age would be another important one for you?
663 P: Mmm Yeah I seek out people who are a bit older I suppose you have been
664 in the profession for a very long time because none of these people seem to
665 have you know I mean this whole experience has made me doubt myself
666 seriously
667 INT: Mmm
668 P: And I think someone who can abuse their power in such a damaging way
669 towards a trainee they don't realise what an impact in can have really
670 INT: Mmm. What is power for you?
671 P: power?
672 INT: yeah notions of power in supervision?
673 P: Um I guess overstepping your boundaries without overstepping your

674 boundaries knowing acknowledging you are doing it and I guess do whatever
675 that you want to do um knowing that you can you mean what this word power
676 means to me?

677 INT: Mmm

678 P: Yeah, um

679 INT: in the context of supervision

680 P: Yeah overstepping your boundaries, playing psychological games because
681 you know what you're doing you have the knowledge or um yeah

682 INT: have the knowledge because of

683 P: Because of you know I guess the number of you have the experience you
684 have the knowledge you're an expert in the relationship so you know exactly
685 what to do to manipulate the person or you know you can find ways to to
686 damage them

687 INT: Mmm

688 P: And I guess again I don't want to be a victim in this whole situation
689 because I think I've learnt a lot from it and one thing I've learnt is is that you
690 know qualifying soon I think its important to recognise your own power but
691 but to use it in a suitable and good way

692 INT: Mmm

693 P: and I would never ever in my life do what they did to me to the trainee to
694 any human being. That to me does not ah that's one thing I've basically been
695 able to I've been able to see it and and realise that that's the worst thing I
696 mean it can be so damaging

697 INT: Mmm

698 P: it really can

699 INT: You talk about um coming up to qualification soon um being mindful of
700 your own power I wonder if if you feel believe that trainees have power or is it

701 something more that you acquire once you've qualified or?

702 P: I think I think trainees do have power in the sense that we see clients so

703 then we are in a position of power when we conduct research we're in a

704 position of power

705 INT: Mmm

706 P: because um then you know a lot of the times yeah I think as a trainee you

707 are but then it's different because once you've qualified then you know

708 especially if you're doing I suppose a doctorate or a any kind of qualification

709 when you get your then that's a different kind of a I suppose the title that you

710 get is quite puts you in a powerful position

711 INT: Within the profession or?

712 P: Within your profession yeah

713 INT: Mmm

714 P: and also within the wider society I would think so being mindful of not of

715 always retaining that sense of humanity and to think that just because I

716 suppose you're a psychologist you can yes you probably do have a lot of

717 power in terms of even the knowledge that you have I know the word

718 knowledge keeps coming up [laughs]

719 INT: Mmm

720 P: But to be able to use it in a useful way.

721 INT: Um with spent some time talking about power and supervision, is there

722 anything else that you would like to talk about or raise?

723 P: I guess I wanted to say that this experience has also sometimes I think I said

724 it before but um made me yeah not trust authority but also be very closed and

725 so sometimes you know but I'm starting to open up now but I wouldn't be

725 myself in supervision I would just constantly be on guard

726 INT: Mmm

727 P: and look for a look out for cues [laughs] or nything that would potentially
728 you know I would have this I suppose thought that oh my god what if he calls
729 up the university you know like on what grounds why would he call you know
730 its not even going to cross his mind but what if he thinks I'm completely you
731 know crap um
732 INT: Who who are you talking about?
733 P: My supervisor you know in supervision
734 INT: Ok sorry yeah
735 P: um so this is these are the scars basically that's left you know I'm working
736 on it in therapy
737 INT: Mmm. Well I appreciate you participating in this and the opening up that
738 it involves so um thanks very much
739 P: Yeah we're done great.

APPENDIX H
TRANSCRIPT – ‘EVE’

1 INT: Ok so the first question I wanted to ask was can you describe for me how
2 you have found your experience of supervision in your development as a
3 counselling psychologist?

4 P: Mmm Um I've had a lot quite a few different placements so different
5 experiences of working with supervisors um my first experience was wasn't
6 great to be honest it was a group supervision um at a um university student
7 counselling sort of placement um and I've had and if I was sort of to run
8 through the different types of placements I've had

9 INT: Mmm

10 P: go back to the beginning would that be ok?

11 INT: Yeah that's fine yeah

12 P: um so that was a group supervision with a counsellor a senior counsellor
13 there and um then I ran a second placement at a hospital at an end stage renal
14 unit with a clinical psychologist as a supervisor um and I've worked for a
15 couple of years in an NHS PCT counselling service providing counselling to
16 the whole of a geographic area

17 INT: Mmm

18 P: where I have an external counsellor um qualified as a counsellor supervisor
19 [laughs]

20 INT: Right

21 P: And um I've also worked in a learning disability unit with a counselling
22 psychologist so I would firstly have to say that they were all different
23 experiences INT: Mmm

24 P: to each other um and how its affected my um identity I guess when I've my
25 first two years I had um the group supervision at the UWE you know
26 counselling service

27 INT: Mmm

28 P: And you know I was really quite excited about the idea of group
29 supervision. I thought it would really fit with you know out there sitting with
30 other people supporting each other and big ideas about it um but and really
31 looking back I was really very affected as I think most people are by the fact
32 that it was my very first year of training I didn't know what to expect and um I
33 was in that position of looking for an expert to help me and um and everyone I
34 was the only counselling psychology trainee there

35 INT: Mmm

36 P: Um and you know initially that didn't make a difference but ultimately I
37 think it did and I was sort of differently trained or um had a um the training is
38 quite intense so I felt like I learnt a lot

39 INT: Mmm

40 P: and then in my second year when I began to try and share in the group what
41 I learnt I found my supervisor had I had changed I think and my supervisor
42 had she wasn't particularly good in the first year now that I look back but in
43 the second year

44 INT: Mmm

45 P: She would actively put me down in the group say you know she didn't
46 agree with what I was saying and um and I mean the power dynamic of that
47 was you know I was I mean I guess what helped and didn't help was that I'm a
48 mature student so I had a woman not much older than me um being very
49 bullying and I really didn't like that at all but I was I didn't feel I was in a
50 position to do anything about it. So I suffered quite a lot actually and I spoke
51 to my tutors here um so it also didn't help that it was at UWE so it was you
52 know it became difficult to complain about um

53 INT: Because of um within the same organisation in a way

54 P: yeah I think so you know it was um I mean I was encouraged by my tutors
55 to stand up for myself and actually what I found was um that her bullying was
56 so great for people in this group and she was very she became very off hand
57 and she would we were in her room and her computer she left her computer on
58 so that the binging if the emails came in and in the middle of things she would
59 go check and come back um and you know be paying any attention to the
60 group

61 INT: Mmm

62 P: and some of the, in the second year we had two first years in our group
63 different counselling training would be crying and highly anxious and she
64 would say we can't bring that stuff here

65 INT: Mmm

66 P: And I found that you know I found the whole thing you know could be
67 pretty traumatising actually for people and um I became quite angry about it
68 and what would happen with these people who looked to me in the group was
69 they would talk to me about it outside of the room but not speak up in the
70 room so I found that in the end I couldn't really tolerate it but when I tried to
71 complain she sort of manipulated very cleverly manipulated the situation into
72 something else and like you know there was something wrong with me and I
73 was new in my training and I didn't know what I was talking about

74 INT: Mmm

75 P: that there was a um clash of personalities and ah which you know is a very
76 poor thing for a counsellor to say and not explain [laughs]

77 INT: Mmm

78 P: But she didn't actually manage to um whats the word you know by me
79 getting angry so I was pathologised by being angry

80 INT: Mmm

81 P: so and and the other people in the group didn't feel they could stand up
82 INT: Mmm
83 P: to her and
84 INT: You felt you could or?
85 P: Well I didn't actually at the end I don't if I had any choice whatsoever
86 because it was a completely intolerable
87 INT: Mmm
88 P: situation and and in in that being new and in training and stuff also that
89 wasn't supporting my client work nobody had their client work supported that
90 is why I complained in the end was that though it was intolerable for me um
91 you know ultimately it was entirely unethical situation where we weren't
92 being our clients weren't being supervised
93 INT: Mmm
94 P: So I went to her boss um ??? [laughs] and um you know I've I ??? we
95 suggested different ways that we could work and in the end um they decided
96 that I could choose to have a different supervisor but on my own and the group
97 were told that I'd abandoned them and I was told by this woman that you
98 know I was doing a terrible thing
99 INT: Mmm
100 P: to them so um
101 INT: So it was put on you you in a way
102 P: Yeah it was all sort of turned back on me
103 INT: Mmm
104 P: and she didn't and she didn't like that um what didn't also help was I was
105 doing a project my third year project using their the counselling service
106 INT: Mmm
107 P: um so she was supposed to be helping me with that so there was some dual

108 role going on um that you know I to be you know she she brought that up and
109 I'm not sure I think that's another distraction from you know ultimately she
110 would talk a lot about herself in the hour sessions. We have two hours four of
111 us um you know I had at that time I had six clients and people have between
112 four and six clients so and it was every other week so you know that's not a
113 great deal of time

114 INT: Mmm

115 P: to be bringing, it might have been every week actually now that I think
116 about it, but still not a great deal of time to you know do that. And she would
117 spend great deals of time talking about her terrible life

118 INT: Mmm

119 P: and how somebody became pregnant in our group and she spent a great deal
120 of time saying how she couldn't have children and how sad she was about it
121 she couldn't talk about her pregnancy it the group it was

122 INT: Mmm, lots of no no talking zones in a way yeah?

123 P: Yeah yeah and you could easily be tripped up by those as well so you know
124 my my sort my sort of style I suppose is I sort of through myself into this
125 group um and then you know ultimately people felt like they can talk about
126 anything and if they did they were told um that she expertly told them how to
127 do it differently and better there was no support at all and I you know when I
128 went I mean the group still would come to me afterwards but they wouldn't
129 complain um because of the power and being on a training course you know
130 is adds a huge element I think you know if we were I don't think it would be
131 there at all if you I think ethical issues would be allowed to be sorted out but I
132 think that interfered with um people feeling like they could speak up

133 INT: in what way what do you mean by that?

134 P: Um sort of like a school way I think um maybe the power of that maybe

135 there was two lots of you know power in the relationship that you know you
136 have to get to the end of have to get your hours its not easy to get placements,
137 if you get black, in your mind if you get black marked in a placement early on
138 which is what I felt like was going to happen to me and you know it sort of did
139 [laughs] in some ways, then um you know what did that mean for the rest of
140 your training, how would your tutors react to that as well

141 INT: Mmm

142 P: so you had you know you had had management in one camp and maybe
143 you know a part from my personal history would lead me to believe that I
144 would get punished everywhere you know for then I might get punished but
145 my tutors were actually quite supportive to be fair

146 INT: Mmm

147 P: ah but maybe other people's in that room maybe they weren't so supported,
148 I don't know but I did feel like you know supervision wouldn't be the same if
149 you were out of training I think perhaps you might feel you have more
150 personal I do feel that now

151 INT: Mmm

152 P: in my supervisions because I've had some awful experiences and now I
153 think you know from that and having done that I feel I've put the clients first
154 and that's what I'm going to continue to do and if that um you know upsets
155 supervisors then I'm not sure that's about me necessarily you know

156 INT: Mmm

157 P: I would just have to fight to have that you know I would want somebody to
158 have probably be there for me so that I can be there for them you know its not
159 possible to do the work without it I don't think

160 P: its just such a key element an impossible to sort of ethically have anything
161 without that so um

162 INT: So that must have made it quite difficult for you then to, you said you
163 had six clients and um didn't feel like enough time within which to sort of get
164 support for that

165 P: Absolutely

166 INT: And within that time you felt that it wasn't enough support being given
167 by her it was a lot of focus was on her rather than on your clients

168 P: Yeah there was a lot of focus on her and there was her as the expert and it
169 was it was sort of it it is very difficult to build up the confidence in yourself
170 I think initially its very deconstructing process counselling training and you
171 know you need a bit of help to keep the reconstruction bit of it and she was
172 just completely dismissive of you know she she what she was doing was right
173 and you know so a few of us suggested something and I mean I once
174 suggested ah people were saying well you know I can't get my head around
175 this client and I'm not sure where to go or what clinical work to do whatever

176 INT: Mmm

177 P: Um and I'd had been I had done some formulation training and its its done
178 quite relationally its sort of here and my you know I'm there I knew there was
179 some feelings in the in some parts of the counselling world that it wasn't a
180 good you know the word formulation I think scares people but anyway I
181 brought in the um wers caresers sort of in a way looking at things and um you
182 know I never thought I thought she was going to have a fit in the room you
183 know she went sort of bright red and said of course you don't have to do and
184 people would go other people that you know were saying oh it was a bit like
185 actually they look to me and they'd stopped looking to her and you know that
186 had a kind of annoying for her and it wasn't right at all but I think they trusted
187 me and they didn't trust her

188 INT: Mmm

189 P: Because of how she treated them and I think they thought even though I
190 was early on in my training I was a better bet and um you know it was pretty
191 uncomfortable for me being in that position but you know I'd felt like I
192 didn't want to let people down in my group either but um

193 INT: Mmm

194 P: Some of then you know that sounds really useful and I wasn't saying it was
195 right or wrong or whatever I just suggested it um you know really

196 INT: So you were bringing in um bringing in some of your previous
197 experience in to to offer it to your colleagues

198 P: Yeah that's what I thought. Group supervision was about people sharing
199 fears feelings and experiences and clinical um you know something that
200 worked for them because we used to present clients you know and then
201 sometimes you could present a client and actually be very humiliated by the
202 response from the supervisor and um

203 INT: Could you give an example?

204 P: Um well there were quite a few incidences but um I don't know because it
205 was a little while ago now but there was um she would quite often bring in
206 transference sort of stuff that you know it is a part of she was quite
207 psychodynamic I think psychoanalytic

208 INT: Hmm

209 P: Um and we were all different, people had different somebody was
210 humanistic I who you know had a broader range of um stuff and at that time I
211 suppose you know I hadn't really decided where I was going with my identity
212 but you know I was trying things on and trying things out and

213 INT: Mmm

214 P: Um so you know I was happy to take it all in um but I you know distinctly

215 remember people breaking down in tears after you know sort of maybe being
216 told what they were doing was wrong or it had been you know could that have
217 possibly have harmed the client I mean that's a really devastating thought
218 when you're new I remember that distinctly you know that I didn't want to do
219 any harm I mean I possibly when you're starting out you may not do a huge
220 [laughs] deal of good well not good um clinically your very new in that so
221 that's something that you build up

222 INT: Mmm

223 P: but I'm pretty sure nobody did any harm you know but that was the
224 suggestion you know that we might of, she was very perhaps she was very
225 hard and her style was just really destructive you know

226 INT: But that description of doing harm is that felt quite extreme for you or?

227 P: Mmm yeah yeah I think you know I distinctly perhaps that is where I
228 distinctly remember it sort of thinking you know just not being sure of really I
229 wasn't supported in I wasn't wholly sure whether what I was doing was
230 actually I do remember one I had a client um quite early on who had been a
231 victim of she's a mature student who had been a victim of domestic violence
232 and um you know I was quite new on and I mean maybe I shouldn't have been
233 allocated her because you were you know there was a process gone through
234 before you got the client to make sure they were you were of the right level of
235 training um to have this sort of person but um so but you know I did my best
236 with that client and um you know I remember many suggestions that perhaps I
237 should have her and ah you know perhaps she would have been better off with
238 some one more experienced but that wasn't my doing

239 INT: Mmm

240 P: um and I had to I had a bereavement in the middle of one year and um an
241 unexpected sort of bereavement so I had another client at that time who was he

242 was quite he it was short term therapy so um he was he was a bit odd and I
243 was struggling with him um and he was sort of alluding to stuff and not
244 talking about it, anyway he um she said I'll give him the choice if he wants to
245 wait coz I was only going to be away a week or so um or allocate him to
246 someone else. And she took him on as a client and then kept insinuating to me
247 that he was doing much better with her and I mean this was highly unethical
248 anyway even talking about a client with me when I'm not her supervisor
249 INT: Mmm

250 P: I didn't ask her what was happening I didn't even know she had taken on
251 this client until she had told me about it and it was sort of like well you know
252 well don't allocate me the client if you don't think I'm capable that's fine so
253 lots of instances like that. The one time that I did really need help was I had a
254 client who I felt had a psychotic break and um she was talking to me about it
255 and I was feeling about of my depth so you know it's a highly ethical sort of
256 issue so I looked for some emergency supervisory support and I um they
257 eventually got round to talking to me about a week later

258 INT: Mmm

259 P: Um and we just very it was even her it was someone else and they said oh
260 you know that moments passed now it will be alright carry on so I carried on
261 with this client but at at that point I really don't feel I had the level of training
262 to um understand how to work with somebody with a who either had or might
263 have with me a psychotic break so

264 INT: Mmm. When you say level of training do you mean um learning
265 different theories or experiences with clients or?

266 P: Both I think really I mean by that point I'd had very little experience with
267 clients. Also hadn't had any training on um on that sort of type of um you
268 know there's a lot of fear involved when people talk about that and which I

269 don't feel so much now because I have much more understanding of it and
270 I've worked with people with it but you know at that point that was when I
271 perhaps thought I might be doing harm because I didn't I really really didn't
272 feel like I had the level of training for that but nobody would listen to me so I
273 carried on with her. Fortunately she didn't have anymore psychotic breaks and
274 I did as much research as I could into supporting me being with her but um I I
275 don't think I did any harm ultimately now but you know it didn't seem right to
176 me at all at the time

177 INT: Mmm

178 P: So that's my first experience of supervision [laughs]

179 INT: yeah ok. What other experiences would you like to talk about?

180 P: Um I guess from my first experience I sort of I mean I did stood up to this
181 woman in the end but still what I was left with from that was um that you
182 know what happened actually after that was they decided not to take
183 counselling psychology trainees so you know for me there can't be any
184 coincidence that perhaps they don't feel ready to have a counselling psycho
185 coz I was different to other trainees who'd had different counselling trainings
186 um I was much more you know I was sort of maybe I was trained and I was
187 more you have to be a more mature student as well to even enter the course
188 although I'm a little bit more mature than most [laughs] but um certainly you
189 know there were lots of people my age and younger so you know maybe I was
190 much less likely to take any crap and that sort of thing

191 INT: Mmm

192 P: I just felt I was too long in the tooth to be bullied by anyone um and I didn't
193 expect to find it in that environment um but it it drew me to wonder a bit about
194 who you're supervised by and how your training you know how are we
195 training which is a bit mysterious to some other people or other areas perhaps

196 and how that influences you know and the year of course the year that you are
197 in of training you know influences how you might experience power in my
198 you know when I look back

199 INT: Mmm

200 P: um but I'd had to make a stand at a very early stage in my you know in my
201 second year I thin after that well if I have to make a stand I hope that I don't
202 [laughs] in the future but um

203 INT: So you felt that there was something about that your counselling
204 psychology training you are undertaking which was difficult for them in some
205 way mysterious for them and in your in your trying handling the situation your
206 age was something that came into it of not wanting to put up with that?

207 P: Yeah I do think that

208 INT: Mmm

209 P: um I'd also had something that came into my mind just then um that I feel
210 you know rightly or wrongly I don't know about this but I think um that she
211 was her training was threatened by my with my level of training was going to
212 be end up in a higher position perhaps then hers and you know that's not
213 anything I don't think I was demonstrating and was very new and was looking
214 for help um but ultimately I wonder if her um you know there was some
215 professional jealousy about the fact that I was going to because she did
216 introduce me as once to someone when I was out in the coffee shop so I don't
217 even know who this person was oh this is {participant name} she's one of the
218 new kids on the block you know a trainee in counselling psychology and that
219 but she didn't say it [laughs] in a very nice way

220 INT: Mmm

221 P: It was sort of like she thinks she's better than me sort of a way [laughs] and
222 um I thought why would somebody do that you don't even have to introduce

223 me she could have just said hello or this is {participants name} she works in
224 the counselling service um so you know these things you know added up for
225 me and my you know at the end of the you know what I had to learn to survive
226 in that placement was um that and you know I was helped by the course here
227 and my own counselling which was mandatory fortunately um was that um
228 you know I can only ever be fifty percent part of that relationship you know
229 that it it because I think there's a tendency to take it all on

230 INT: Mmm

231 P: And she was certainly setting up that scenario that it was somehow all me
232 and refusing to acknowledge her part and she wrote me an awful end of report
233 she had to do a report for me and it was at best mediocre. I was pretty sure I
234 was trying really hard but you know I didn't get any points for trying hard I
235 just sort of got pathologised in this report

236 INT: Mmm

237 P: through stuff in there she'd brought up um that we'd had in our confidential
238 discussions sometimes stuff comes up like if you've suffered a bereavement
239 yourself how you managed it. So I'd you know been talking about it and she
240 anecdotely taken bits out and said this is why she has a problem with this so
241 this was confidential stuff and when I questioned her she said nothing is
242 confidential in supervision

243 INT: Mmm

244 P: So its like you know being able to create your own stick to beat someone up
245 with I didn't feel like that was a particularly clever and I I really made me
246 think I don't like the behind closed doors aspect of supervision or counselling
247 you know I um you know I like the counselling psychology perspective of um
248 you know things being not hidden

249 INT: Mmm

250 P: um and out there and being able to account perhaps for the stuff based in
251 research and keeping yourself uptodate so that you cant become you know so
252 you wont make a meglomaniac in your department sort of thing so its all quite
253 helpful [laughs] in hindsight but you know not at the time but um
254 INT: I wondered in terms of you talking about counselling psychology that um
255 you feeling like it being training as a counselling psychologist being
256 something mysterious for her and for them
257 P: Yep
258 INT: and you referred to as well about sort of the training your doing ending
259 up being higher in a way and sort of professional jealousy
260 P: Yep
261 INT: what do you see counselling psychology as being or as being as they
262 perceived it as being?
263 P: What do I think they perceived it as being?
264 INT: Mmm
265 P: Um I don't know I felt slightly confused by it I knew that something was
266 going on but I'd had been other people had who as psychologists said that
267 they'd experienced um professional what they thought was a professional
268 jealousy about the fact that um you know it's a higher level of training perhaps
269 a doctorate level of training INT: Aha
270 P: Which you know it is the highest I suppose level of training that is true um
271 but it's a training you have to go through to become a counselling
272 psychologist um so I really hate power you know I'm sort of quite
273 passionately you know its one of 274 the things I like about the counselling
274 psychology is that they pay a lot of
275 attention to power and its influence
276 INT: Mmm

277 P: but you know I don't know I don't know if I can answer that can I what I
278 personally think is that she was um thinking actually I remember now
279 something she said to me was that um there's a woman who got promoted as a
280 senior in the department we were in and this woman who's a was my
281 supervisor was also a senior counsellor and she said to me one day see that
282 woman over there who I'd never met her before who just got promoted she
283 said um I supervised her so there's hope for you you know you might over
284 take me and so I don't think I was imagining it really I think there was a fear
285 in her that um and a reality in some ways that I would overtake her
286 INT: Mmm
287 P: Um or perhaps I perhaps she thought that I thought I was better than her um
288 and you know she might have thought that ultimately because I was so
289 annoyed with her that I couldn't I didn't take her crap and I don't think she
290 liked that either
291 INT: Mmm
292 P: So but I didn't I never at no point did I think I was better than her um I
293 think um you know quite honestly I could have run a supervision session
294 better than her with no training whatsoever so um you know in some ways
295 perhaps [laughs] perhaps I was holding ideas like that
296 INT: Mmm
297 P: You know that's just out of sort of disgust really with what was going on
298 but I think there was with her in particular that going on and you know I have
299 sometimes I haven't I didn't find that in my current, well I'm just finishing
300 with a supervisor actually and starting with a new one um but I had two
301 psychology, psychologist supervisors who I experience very differently to her
302 INT: Yeah
303 P: Um it was like they understood perhaps [laughs] the training I was going

304 through

305 INT: Yep, so do you feel that makes a difference for the supervisors to to be

306 aware of what the training involves as a counselling psychologist or?

307 P: Yeah I think probably its quite crucial to be honest that and I don't that it its

308 happening um I mean counselling psychology is not it's a sort of hybrid really

309 in a lot of ways, you have a counselling training and then um you know that

310 can be a bit confusing initially I think because you think you're becoming a

311 counsellor when you're becoming a psychologist, so the latter years of your

312 training seem to be much more about being a psychologist and the early years

313 are about um learning the counselling side of it um. So you know it probably

314 would have been difficult for me to explain you know and I did try in some

315 places to explain what a counselling psychologist was but I think really

316 probably had an idea myself, and I think it's different for everyone, you know

317 everyone that I've met has a different idea and a different identity that they're

318 you know still forming usually

319 INT: Mmm

320 P: um so yeah I think it would be much more helpful. And the fact that they've

321 decided to just not have counselling psychologists um makes me more

322 suspicious about what's going on behind closed doors if they don't want to be

323 accounted for and they don't want to have people question them then um you

324 know I don't think that sounds like a very safe place. It was a very unsafe

325 place. I recently met up with the people who were in this group that I was in

326 who feel exactly the same now as they did then

327 INT: Mmm

328 P: And one of them stopped counselling training. I think it's through this

329 woman's treatment of her. Told her not to bring her anxiety to the counselling

330 you know to the supervision. Where else are you going to bring your

331 counselling anxiety I mean that's, anyway

332 INT: So what did you what you say is, how has that experience shaped you do

333 you think?

334 P: Um well would it be helpful to talk about my my other experiences in terms

335 of power in how its shaped me now or you know I know that I was affected by

336 that ah but in my second year I also had a second placement at an [particular

337 ward] in a hospital with a Clinical psychologist who you know he was having

338 lots of personal problems actually and um so I didn't get as much supervision

339 as I would have liked, in order, because it was an entirely new placement and

340 I'd never experienced anything like that before. And what I would be doing is

341 um going to hospital beds with people who were on dialysis. I did very little

342 actual counselling you know with all of the boundaries in place, in fact I had

343 two clients I could counsel like that everyone else either in a hospital bed for a

344 half hour or so you know it was useful in its own right but it was it was a very

345 sort of unique sort of specific to that particular ailment. So this guy wasn't

346 there um and people would regularly die actually and so you know there were

347 some pretty traumatic aspects of, and at one point I asked if I could have I

348 think it had been in a moment of desperation I asked him if I could have

349 proper supervision and from that point he started pencilling in times and made

350 sure and he gave me his home details and said you know if he ever wasn't

351 there and I needed to talk through something and so it was a bit more

352 supported after that

353 INT: Proper in the sense of being available and actually having times allocated

354 or?

355 P: Yeah you know that sort of came out when I was talking to him and I

356 through I had a lot of anxiety about you know there were so many procedures

357 in hospital that have to be gone through um I was so new I just needed, I was

358 only in one day a week as well, and he'd chosen that day so he could be there
359 and he wasn't often wasn't there. So I think it was anxiety about everything I
360 just felt I've got to hang onto him so he wouldn't go away and I could ask him
361 what I needed to ask him and if he wasn't there I needed to know you know
362 something drastic drastic things were all that happened [laughs] so you know
363 where could I find him and I think that was probably what I was asking and I
364 think he did hear that to be honest. Just before I started there his father died
365 and it was a difficult personal time for him but instead of cancelling the
366 placement he allowed it to go on. In hindsight it possibly would have been
367 easier on him as well as me to have not gone with the placement. In the end it
368 did give me good experience but it was another um you know it was a more
369 traumatic experience on your second year of your course I thought you I know
370 generally thought I would like to give that a go and then when I got there oh
371 my god I don't have the first idea about any of this and I could do something
372 really wrong in this hospital

373 INT: So something about the uniqueness of that placement, of the boundary
374 difficulties or issues and the hospital context but people dying as well

375 P: As well yeah I mean I knew it was end stage renal failure so um but he
376 hadn't really told me that people would be dying all the time and I would go in
377 one week see someone and the next week they would be dead and I would
378 sometimes find out by accident so it was sort of you know I actually managed
379 I don't know if I got used to it but I got used to the idea of it and that helped
380 me manage um things and these people were very ill and they were very
381 entitled to have counselling just because they were a year or so from death,
382 you know what better time to try and have someone help them through that
383 period of time so you know it is something I would think about doing in the
384 future but supervision wise there was a strange, power ways if I think about

385 that relationship there was um it would be difficult to, I mean maybe at one
386 point I took the power in saying I want proper supervision. I didn't feel like
387 um he had a really good understanding of what the training was and he had a
388 really good view of counselling psychologists actually he asked for one
389 INT: Mmm

390 P: And ultimately he left clinical psychology after I left and I think he was
391 becoming very disillusioned with aspects of it perhaps so he wasn't really
392 wholly available so I just had to take from him what I needed in order to do
393 that placement so I don't even, you know although there is, there's always
394 power in those relationships its just hard work trying to have an audience with
395 him. So it was like I was chasing him [laughs] in that respect um and you
396 know he's a nice guy um but I felt a bit maternal towards him which is a
397 weird, he's the same age as me, but I thought you know maybe its something
398 to do with his losing his dad you know how someone that might have felt a bit
399 I don't know. So that was a bit of an odd one

400 INT: What was the affect of that of those maternal feelings?

401 P: Did it affect the relationship? Yeah. I think it I think it I didn't act
402 maternally towards him I don't think um I didn't see him much and he didn't
403 seem to be you know psychologically available much um he was very sort of
404 flippant and jokey sort of quite quirky. I often thought about these things when
405 I wasn't with him When I thought about it and I thought [laughs] he's going
406 through a hard time I think I forgave him for actually not being a particularly
407 good supervisor you know in terms of had I of been able to write a script of
408 what I needed you know he almost certainly didn't provide that but um it
409 wasn't the same type of client work in the same way um people were very ill
410 and um you know a lot of the depressive symptoms were to do with the illness
411 rather than depression per se so I had a lot of learning there was a lot of

412 learning in that and then I relatively quickly got known by walking around the
413 hospital in the wrong direction quite often [laughs] and attending meetings
414 that he wasn't going to and that sort of thing so you know that was ok I quite
415 liked that actually part of my part of why I kept in the programme if you like
416 when I think back to that people were looking to me as a psychologist um and
417 you know a hospital setting and I think that power that gave me a sort of
418 power with other or it gave me um credence

419 INT: You were seen seen in a way

420 P: Yeah I was seen you know who I was and my advice was asked and
421 respected for the level I was at sort of thing and I was taken seriously. That
422 was a very different experience to you know the one here where I was not
423 taken seriously at all so you know there have been at at that time I was
424 thinking I think I would prefer a psychology placement because I think
425 somebody would take me a bit more seriously

426 INT: Mmm

427 P: Um and that was only that was a six month placement and then I took on
428 another six month placemtn at a learning disability organisation NHS um
429 trust was in [particular location] with a counselling psychologist um and they
430 also had one of the only bug bares about that it was all very new to me
431 although I had have people in my family with learning disabilities but I learnt
432 that people are as unique in that arena as they are anywhere else and I think I
433 held a bit of an idea about that but they had a clinical psychologist who they
434 get paid to look after if you like in the same placement and things were set up
435 for her but I had to try and set things up myself so I was treated differently

436 INT: Mmm

437 P: But you know somehow I had a much better rapport with the counselling
438 psychologist supervisor um you know she was like I got on really

439 INT: Better than um the other supervisee or do you mean in terms of other
440 supervisors or?

441 P: Yeah I think I did this is the um this is I mean probably not very ethically
442 but she would sometimes talk to me about this, my supervisor, would talk to
443 me about how clinical psychologists have it easy and it's a day off and they
444 still moan about it they don't have it as hard as us so there's some sort of
445 weird solidarity going on which I don't think I was really creating um but in
446 the same way she was ignoring the fact that she wasn't treating me as well as
447 um you this other who they're being paid to look after so she had a lot of
448 sympathy for my counselling psychology trainee status but not being very
449 aware that um you know she wasn't giving me as much at this placement as
450 she could um but and she was I never felt I never felt put down by her she was
451 very supportive and um but she was also very finicky and reports were I didn't
452 have very much time or supervision over doing reports so I would try them
453 and send them back to her and they would get sent back to me so I often felt
454 like a bit stupid because I didn't really know how to, I hadn't been trained how
455 to write a psychology report and um I did eventually by the end of that
456 placement I had written a few that were she'd passed and I think probably that
457 was you know I felt quite pleased [laughs] about that

458 INT: Mmm

459 P: yeah so that was you know I didn't overly I felt less I did feel some power
460 in that but I didn't feel like it was abused um

461 INT: I guess that um I mean we've talked about power at different points but
462 um maybe its we could more specifically address it. I wondered what notions
463 of power in supervision you have, what that means for you?

464 P: Um well there's no getting away from power in supervisory relationships. I
465 think they I think that needs to be understood in the relationship um and that

466 hour you know my personal sort of um feelings about power in relationships
467 you know I think you have to be really quite mindful about what those things
468 mean to you in order to be aware of you might be what that might be doing to
469 the relationship and its really a very important relationship I think so important
470 for me to be able to be honest um and you know I think sometimes the power
471 element stops you being entirely honest about what's maybe what's happening
472 with a client. I feel like that is the mechanism that is somehow fouled up in
473 terms of you know if something is honestly is happening with your client but
474 you're a feeling there's some professional problem you know I can't be seen
475 to be having this sort of problem at my stage or I might be thrown off my
476 course if I say something

477 INT: Mmm

478 P: um so the the dynamics of the power um you know acknowledging that
479 they're especially if you're meeting somebody for the first time you know a
480 new supervisor you sort of have a notion of breaking a supervisor in so
481 personally to you know to be able to get to a point where I do feel safe enough
482 to disclose whatever [laughs] I need to disclose about own work I mean for
483 example recently I've been feeling like I've been a bit interpretative with a
484 particular client and I came away from a session oh I told her exactly you
485 know what my thought was going on

486 INT: That caught you by surprise or?

487 P: It did it did and I you know and I actually didn't like that and so I'm
488 finishing with one supervisor and starting with another and with the supervisor
489 that's broken in I probably would have brought that that would have been a
490 place to sort of talk that over sort of thing maybe its to do with this client or
491 maybe its to do with me and is that how I want my identity to be and um so
492 with my supervisor I'm not sure if I'm going to be I might lose that

493 INT: Mmm

494 P: You know I might just be you know I have thought about it myself and I
495 tried something different with this particular client and I haven't been
496 watching you know I don't think there's anything wrong with being
497 interpretative at times but um you know not I didn't think I was a wholly
498 interpretative person you know so those are the sort of things I think you need
499 to have the trust in the relationship in order to feel like um you know you are
500 not going to be maybe going back to this earlier supervision being told that
501 you're wrong or punished or something for um just trying to get an honest sort
502 of discussion you know so I think I'm probably a bit fearful um about what a
503 new supervisors going to be like now

504 INT: Mmm

505 P: Having broken my old one [laughs] you know but um

506 INT: So power's something that's always it's always present and its
507 potentially can interfere with the honesty you feel you need to talk about your
508 clients

509 P: yeah yeah

510 INT: And it's something you talk about breaking them in so sort of over time a
511 trust can develop where that power diminishes or?

512 P: I think it's sort of you know building up the relationship with someone
513 because its not a lot of time either to do that in I realised I'd had this
514 supervisor who's leaving I'd had for two years and I'd only in the past 6
515 months felt like I'd built up you know a level of trust that I needed with him
516 um you know I had sort of been honest with her in the past and felt a bit
517 punished and I think that's do with the fact that we didn't know enough about
518 each other or our relationship wasn't examined enough because you know
519 you're just discussing clients all the time um there's there isn't any there's

520 very little other time to build up relationship with your supervisors my
521 experience I suppose. I think more attention should be paid to that
522 INT: Yeah I guess coz you um ah I guess one of those earlier experiences
523 talking about how you felt like time to talk about clients was sort of pushed
524 out the way and supervisors not being there for you to get the support with
525 clients for um but there's also it seems for you as well having time to spend on
526 the relationship
527 P: Mmm
528 INT: Having time to talk about clients so to get to know each other
529 P: Yeah yeah I think
530 INT: Not that that's a contradiction but a sort of a
531 P: No no to some degree I mean the longer you spend with each other when
532 you're talking about the clients aspects of yourself come out so you do get to
533 know each other a bit through that but mostly but you know that's
534 professionally getting to know each other its not I mean not that you should go
535 round to people's houses and have parties and stuff [laughs] but I just really
536 sort of you know and I I guess I do have issues with trust um I worked in um a
537 big organisation I had to leave very drastically because um I whistle blew on
538 somebody who was doing something awful to a child and then I was ostracised
539 so I you know have a lot of I'm likely to carry on if I see something like that
540 but I mean the consequences for me have been quite huge so um you know I
541 think perhaps maybe I personally worry about that I mean I think about these
542 things more and I know that there in um and I've had it with my new
543 supervisor I've had an hour meeting with her where we just disgust us um and
544 how we're going to work together and she asked me about my background
545 INT: Mmm
546 P: Um so you know I'm I think she has a little sense of me um but we are

547 likely now to spend all our time talking about clients you know quite rightly
548 sort of thing um yeah but there's something in that something so crucial in
549 that exchange for me about um you know if you can't be honest because you
550 know you lack the trust or you fear the retribution there's this particular
551 supervisor who's external to the organisation the NHS I'm working for they
552 are paid by the NHS but so they are not as external as they think they are um
553 so they don't really answer to anyone it took me a long time to believe I
554 suppose that she wasn't one going to head back to the organisation and say
556 you know [participant's name] is a bit of a head case I'm a bit worried about
557 her or whatever she talked to her supervisors also nothing to do with the you
558 know if she had some concerns I guess um so you know supervisors are there
559 or should be there to support you in doing your work but I guess part of me
560 doesn't believe has had experiences that have led me to believe that is not
561 always the case so you know I just really seek out being able to have this
562 honest sort of place where clients can be safe in um so I want somebody to tell
563 me you know I might go off the boil about you know that sort of Jahari
564 window sort of thing what I want from the supervisor is just to tell me what
565 I'm not seeing you know that's that's quite hard sometimes but for me that's
566 entirely what safety is about in terms of safety for clients um so if you hide
567 that coz you're considering or they don't give you that because you don't have
568 the relationship enough to to do that or I can't accept it coz there's not enough
569 trust and then I feel it's something punishing

570 INT: Mmm

571 P: Then that's how that's co crucial I think in the relationship but um then
572 there are different styles of supervision as well I've recently been doing some
573 training on that but ah I don't know perhaps it's very individual as well for me
574 this is what I want um

575 INT: You've alluded to differences in terms of um between supervisors in
576 terms of being a counsellor or a counselling psychologist or clinical
577 psychologist um have there been have you experienced any differences in
578 terms of approaches or?

579 P: Well um I Guess I've experienced group and individual supervision so that
580 would be the majority you know I haven't really experienced any great
581 mostly it's been me who's set the agenda um which you know in some ways is
582 a bit dangerous because I not dangerous sorry that's a bit of a drastic word but
583 with this supervisor I've just left with I went in and after my experience of
584 having a supervisor who wouldn't give me any time I went in and said um this
585 is I had an agenda written of what I wanted to go through um and she went
586 okay we'll go along with that sort of thing so you know I haven't I haven't
587 been um presented with would you like to have supervision this way I've
588 tended to go in and say I need to talk about these clients and that was my
589 anxiety I think so wondering now in talking about it if that took away time
590 from what might have been time for the relationship building

591 INT: Mmm

592 P: but I think it's a difficult sort of balance really very little time um you know
593 and in the PCT very needy clients as well they're primary care and you know I
594 would say fifty percent of our clients are suicidal and I've had to very high
595 sort of level of risk so you know finding out about each other seems far less
596 important than making sure that clients are safe while doing the right thing
597 with them um and mostly I find I'm being supported in doing I have a much
598 better idea these days of what um or I have a much better sense my internal
599 supervisor if you like so I don't look to an external supervisor as an expert
600 anymore that has changed

601 INT: Mmm

602 P: and so that's bound to have an impact as well I think

603 INT: Mmm I was going to ask in terms of um I wondered in what ways if any

604 has being a trainee influenced or been influenced by those experiences

605 P: Massively I think

606 INT: Yeah

607 P: Really massively. It's only now that you know in my fourth after the end of

608 my third year we're sort of qualified as counsellors so we've our own

609 university will issue us something to say what training we are equivalent to

610 um so I've felt since then perhaps I've um you know in my counselling

611 placements in particular that um I'm um qualified to be there [laughs] or

612 something or taken a bit seriously because I'm qualified to be there because

613 it's quite a strange position as a trainee I think where you are training for so

614 long um well in ours actually you're training for five years and you've sort of

615 exceeded levels of training and levels of hours that other counsellors they are

616 they can apply for jobs that you can't. I think that the view there's just some

617 suspicion about you know what really are you at that level is it very different

618 training and I think for jobs you know as a counsellor and explained my

619 position as a trainee counselling psychologist you know its been but I'm not

620 sure I haven't gone for any jobs actually [laughs] but I wonder if I do wonder

621 about that

622 INT: Mmm because you haven't been awarded a the qualifications your

623 equivalent of but haven't actually received a

624 P: Yeah yeah you see most people are still operating as um um for free in

625 placements because its there is quite a high um hours sort of I'm trying to

626 think of the word, because you need to have you know you have up to get four

627 hundred and fifty hours in in those years and in other psychology in the

628 clinical psychology you don't there's much more emphasis on different types

629 of aspects of being a psychologist um which even now when I qualify as a
630 psychologist I would really I would really like to have another psychology
631 placement but it doesn't give the hours that you need so most people have a
632 counselling placement but that's not really giving you any an idea about the
633 psychology side of the job um anyway as a trainee definitely definitely when
634 you first start off I don't think you can get away from the new trainee
635 experience of um supervision you know the hanging onto the expert of the
636 some people on our course were already counselling, it possibly would be
637 different for them I think but just starting counselling training is a bit of a
638 roller coaster ride and um you know so I would have just accepted what this
639 woman was offering and thought it was right and um you know I didn't
640 question it until the second year when I thought well you know hang on a
641 minute I'm not sure and it was something about her it wasn't it wasn't all then
642 to do with um you know I still needed some of those things but I just felt like
643 as a human being she was acting appallingly and abusing her power and her
644 position of trust and nobody knew and nobody would believe or do anything
645 about it so I'm still to this day disturbed by that

646 INT: Mmm

647 P: um and that she's still in that position um but that definitely the trainee
648 status in every even now I mean I my supervisor who was just I'm just
649 finishing with after two years in PCT she um made some offhand sort of
650 comment that I hadn't really been aware of before about just being a trainee or
651 um you know what was I moaning about because I don't do very many I don't
652 see very many clients a week through choice at the moment I don't need to to
653 get the hours and I have other commitments and so I don't know why I'm
654 justifying it here really but um so it was you know your seeing four clients
655 what you making a fuss about you're only a trainee and that was quite late into

656 our relationship where I didn't think she'd or maybe I'd stopped viewing
657 myself so much as a trainee but it is also somewhere where it's okay to make a
658 mistake I think and I made a few mistakes and got through those and I was
659 glad of my trainee status

660 INT: Mmm

661 P: Because you know its I think it's a very privileged position to be
662 counselling and in that position of trust and also I would like to think that
663 when I am a supervisor I will be thinking the same about you know I think it
664 would be even more privileged position to be a supervisor supervising
665 someone with a client um and that I was sincerely have paid more attention
666 than this woman did you know yeah definitely so just recently I was reminded
667 of my trainee status by a supervisor [laughs] whether I needed it or not I don't
668 know but ah I did feel it was a bit of a

669 INT: But trainee status has a positive and negative um influence on you in a
670 way

671 P: Mmm

672 INT: It allows you being a trainee you can make mistakes and its forgivable
673 or?

674 P: Mmm. Not so much now I don't think in towards the 5th year but definitely
675 earlier on um I think probably you know I would hope now but I think that's
676 sometimes more about um being in a placement for a period of time because
677 quite often even now I've had friends who've gone to a new placement as a
678 relatively experienced trainee counselling psychologist um and they've made a
679 few mistakes and they're very hard on themselves because um at this level you
680 shouldn't be doing that but I think that its probably more about learning about
681 the new placement and that can happen at anytime you know if I get a job
682 somewhere or a new placement somewhere else there's a whole new learning

683 about that to be done um

684 INT: So in post qualifications you'll come across being new for a period of

685 time or?

686 P: I think so yeah well each new job it's the same I don't psychologists are any

687 different to anyone else um in that respect but I think perhaps there's a bigger

688 um feeling of responsibility to not be like that to somehow you are the expert

689 now as a trained psychologist people are looking to you but in my experience

690 of the counselling psychologists that I've met they are much more forgiving of

691 themselves it seems to be something you need to have um you know and I

692 think I've developed a bit in myself in order to withstand the work actually um

693 so I hope I manage to keep hold of that you know it doesn't matter if you're

694 training or not people make mistakes and you know your level of you'll meet

695 something new and and that's that

696 INT: Mmm. Um ok I guess there's um I asked you a few questions at the start

697 P: Mmm

698 INT: and um I wondered if any of those you feel had an impact in terms of in

699 terms of your experiences of power be it age or being a woman or?

700 P: Oh like demographic type stuff? Um age yes and no I think well I think age

701 has been a positive and a negative sort of aspect um I think in some ways it

702 feels quite difficult to be this age and you know re-training um learning new

703 things and having to having counselling and going through you know there's

704 something perhaps a little bit um I was going to say humiliating but that's not

705 I mean I guess at times it can its I've experienced it personal counselling quite

706 drastically if you like and so you know a part of me didn't expect to do that

707 this sort of time in my life I'm not terribly old but um I didn't expect that from

708 the training so they've been parts of it that I've felt like my age has not gone

709 for me, are you meaning in the training or in the supervision relationship?

710 INT: Um well more supervision leaning

711 P: Ok well I think it must have had an impact on the clinical psychology guy

712 and I'm pretty sure I wouldn't be feeling maternal towards him if I was you

713 know a lot younger actually and this this particular guy was very sort of flirty

714 with people and stuff and I felt like I was a bit safer [laughs] if you like

715 because I was older and he didn't see me in that category so I think there were

716 there were aspects of my age that helped me in maintaining a um enough of a

717 supervisory relationship you know it personally helped me when I was

718 thinking about these things I think um I think age has been my age has with

719 my counselling psychology thing she felt like we were she was a bit younger

720 than me that it might help with rapport actually because this clinical trainee

721 was a lot younger and I think she felt she had much more in common with me

722 INT: Mmm

723 P: And you know I did feel like it was a little bit unethical at times of her um it

724 put me in a position I found but um so you know that would have impacted on

725 that but this particular woman at the beginning I think it was hugely helpful in

726 me being because no-one else in my group felt able to stand up to her and but

727 in all honesty I had a very bullying mother and you know I felt like I could

728 chew her up and spit her out really in terms of bullying [laughs] but it did

729 make me very angry about um you know I have a lot of feelings about people

730 bullying other people and I um I think that sort of helped me when I say

731 helped me it didn't feel great um but in retrospect you know I managed to

732 maintain some ethical stance within a very unethical situation I thought you

733 know I felt that taught me that I was really looking out for the clients um if I

734 had been looking out for myself I would probably have just let it all go and

735 moaned about it behind her back so maybe if I'd been a lot younger and not

736 had the experiences I'd had I wouldn't have done that so I think probably that

737 has I don't know about being if I was a bloke would it have made any
738 difference um there aren't very many blokes in the counselling you know in
739 any of the places that I've been so um it may have in terms of dynamics
740 whether this woman didn't like me particularly and part of me being a woman
741 was part of that or I threatened her and I was the same sex as her sort of thing I
742 don't know. So I think its bound all these things have an impact I think for
743 definite there's no getting away from it um and in my ultimate sort of thing
744 I'm around about the same age as the supervisors and there's just not ordinary
745 I think around about the same age and they've experienced twenty thirty years
746 of practice um so you know I sometimes feel then that they are trying to
747 separate out the affinity that we might have through being the same age and
748 being the same you know being grandparents and that sort of thing um and
749 then sometimes feel there's a bit of separation well you know I'm really the
750 boss here sort of thing

751 INT: Mmm

752 P: um that relationship is you know because ultimately you know you do I'm
753 reporting to them I suppose

754 INT: Mmm. Ok

755 P: Any of the other dynamics you were?

756 INT: Um I guess the ethnicity your cultural background

757 P: Mmm well they've all been white middle class everyone that I've met that
758 impacts on me um in everywhere actually in that it's a part of you know I
759 don't really like but I don't think this is very representative of the whole
760 population but I think you have to be realistic about that and um you know the
761 style of counselling that's offered in a lot of places um is not going to fit every
762 cultural background so sometimes I'm presented with things where I'm sort of
763 glaringly aware that I'm an example of white middle class and lots of people

764 go into counselling [laughs] from that sort of background so um you know I'm
765 part of the club in that way but I'm not terribly comfortable about that and um
766 you know in the counselling psychology sort of in the training and stuff a lot
767 of attention is paid to that type of thing you know and um what was I thinking
768 of I can't think of the word? The context that somebody was in and you know
769 just because if somebody doesn't want to come to your what you're offering
770 then perhaps you need to offer something different and as you know once
771 I'm trained I'm hoping that I can offer what's needed rather than what's
772 always been

773 INT: Mmm challenge that in a way

774 P: on offer yeah yeah I don't really like the sort of you know but you know we
775 are who we are really aren't we so I don't think that's born in mind as much as
776 it could be but um yeah yeah so probably not in the relationships I've had I
777 think it's I think it's been ignored or of the same

778 INT: It hasn't been as different as to

779 P: Yeah to challenge her

780 INT: Ok well that's sort of my main questions I need to ask I wondered is
781 there anything else that you in talking about power and supervision that you
782 want to feel you need to add?

783 P: Um I guess I just want to ask has that been what you were looking for
784 [laugh] in your research and that I know I've sort of read that but is there
785 anything else that's in you know I haven't really answered?

786 INT: Yeah well I guess um you know being qualitative research its something
787 that I will go back and listen over and

788 P: Mmm yeah sure

789 INT: Um but yeah I guess I've got your sense of your experiences of
790 supervision and where you feel power is coming into play

791 P: Yeah I think its with power I have some quite strong feelings about it really
792 but I you know you can't take it out of any situation and my son's very
793 perceptive actually and he interestingly quite recently he's joined the 6th form
794 in the same school he was in and he doesn't think that the teacher that's our
795 um dealing with the shift in power that being a sixth former as to mandatory
796 school cover if you see what I mean [laughs] it's there as well it's just
797 everywhere I think he's absolutely right actually but um you know I've a
798 couple of times thought about storming up there and giving them the benefit of
799 my psychological know-how but um that probably wouldn't help but um so I
800 like that it's paid attention to but it's I think its particularly I'm really quite
801 concerned about it in terms of trainee counselling psychologists and
802 supervision because it's like there's a double power problem with and you
803 might also find people work in the university like I did you know that your
804 course is in so there's an organisational power problem there so anything that
805 get's in the way of direct honest sort of um contact really um
806 INT: Is a power
807 P: Yeah and a potential problem in terms of clients needs so um you know
808 how that's handled is just so sort of I think if you're a supervisor and you
809 know you have first year trainees um you know there's a whole skill set that
810 comes with managing that you know each stage is like you know how
811 important is it to know what stage your supervisee is at in terms of their
812 training and what that training is about so I think probably there's more that
813 can be done in relation to that
814 INT: I wondered you talked you said earlier about um you know in each
815 relationship there's a shared responsibility or a shared aspect to it and I
816 wondered if you feel you have power or what your power is if you feel you
817 have it?

818 P: In the supervision?

819 INT: In the supervision yeah

820 P: I feel it a bit more now well I think I did feel it when I was breaking out if

821 you like [laughs] um don't know actually that's a bit of a strange question um

822 I guess I'd feel maybe its something else as well I wonder because I guess I

823 feel like I have a personal power of um voice and um that I would be prepared

824 to speak up if something was you know I may need an opportunity to do that

825 but um so you know its there are probably aspects other aspects of personality

826 and like self esteem and that sort of thing but um are important in terms of

827 feeling your feeling power in relationships I did you know I do feel like we the

828 responsibility of you know there's only fifty percent in the relationship but

829 sometimes the power shifts over one way I think and um I've not felt anymore

830 than half [laughs] the power in relationship with supervisor um you know with

831 a client I think I probably have that's different and with other people and other

832 relationships but um

833 INT: What determines that you think then? Who gets the greater percentage?

834 P: Percentage what in all relationships or in the supervisory one?

835 INT: The supervisory one

836 P: Um well I think level of training for one sort of you know its almost like

837 you would encourage for me encouraged the power because then you you lack

838 the responsibility in some ways of um so you know if your supervisor has all

839 the answers when you're very new um you know have a great of personal

840 anything really at that point and the deconstructive nature of counselling sort

841 of training um you know in that first year I think that's a really that's a time

842 where your supervisor can really abuse that power and you would let them and

843 you may not even know it was happening um so

844 INT: So your greater vulnerability or?

845 P: Yeah I think yeah I think so and you know some supervisors may feel that
846 you have to be robust enough to do it but whilst you're going through that
847 process I think you know a supervisor would be much better off being mindful
848 of that process um and being supportive

849 INT: Mmm what's in that first year deconstruction do you think? What's is
850 that because of therapy or? You've started this new thing or?

851 P: I think all of it I think mostly therapy probably um and because you know
852 seeing it's a massive responsibility seeing clients and you know helping them
853 you know its not the same as I guess a lot of us probably came into it thinking
854 we were quite good with interpersonal skills and that we had helped a lot of
855 people um and you know really what I realised is that I'd advised a lot of
856 people and pushed my own thoughts onto a lot of people it was entirely
857 different to you know being there and thinking about what that you know or I
858 know I might have had some intuition but that's not that wasn't the whole
859 thing so I'd had very the skills I already had were very small

860 INT: Mmm

861 P: um and with the personal counselling um you know I was very resistant to
862 that to start off with I was being forced upon me and very quickly I realised
863 that without it I wouldn't have been able to survive the first year or so of um
864 worrying about the first client whether I was harming them or you know
865 funnily enough I didn't think about whether I was helping them much [laughs]
866 I just thought I didn't want to harm them that was my first sort of instinct so
867 yeah so much anxiety happens in that initially sort of training in particular for
868 people who are starting the whole process um some people like I said on our
869 course were already counsellors and came in you know I would imagine in a
870 different place had the rigours of the course on top of what they were doing
871 but they were already comfortable enough to be doing the counselling because

872 you know you were scrutinised constantly so that ah you know there's quite a
873 lot of dynamics working at any one time so um so I think that defines it
874 probably quite a lot the level of training um I think your personal um level of
875 personal power would come into that as well which is usually has been a bit
876 stripped away to start with and um that comes back and hopefully I mean I
877 think with this lady that left the course I think she was pretty harmed by the
878 whole supervision process and left and whether that was but then how that was
879 interpreted was that that was some sort of test on her and she wasn't good
880 enough for it would be my belief was she was traumatised unnecessarily she
881 may have left anyway but then she would have thought she left because she
882 wanted to leave not because she was rubbish at it anyway um with power no I
883 don't even like it thinking about it power relationship. With my new
884 supervisor I've been to see once and I think you know she was like a nice
885 woman that's as much as I know about her um and I've almost taken the
886 power or perhaps I do feel like I have more power now like I am going in
887 trying to get more what I want out of the supervision session um and initially I
888 think I'm a bit be damned about it um but I think it will take a while to sort of
889 settle where the power is you know when I my supervisor who I just finished
890 with managed to exert her power at the very end of our relationship in a not
891 particularly nice way um and I you know I guess I you know it is always there
892 but power how you manage it is the important part really but ah and then we
893 all have different moods as well we're all a bit up and down so a bit like client
894 sessions I think when it works well then one you come away from feeling it
895 hasn't worked so well or so

896 INT: In any given moment

897 P: Yeah yeah so quite a moveable sort of feast but

898 INT: Ok well thanks very much for everything you've shared today

APPENDIX I
TRANSCRIPT – ‘GLENDA’

- 1 INT: Ok so the first question that I would like to ask is um can you describe
2 for me how you have found your experience of supervision in your
3 development as a counselling psychologist?
- 4 P: Um I enjoy it more now than I did when I first started with it and at first I
5 was intimidated by it um because I felt that I really didn't know anything and
6 um um I think that's when the power came into it more because um you know
7 it was like a teacher student relationship well it is a student teacher relationship and
8 um and I felt my own lack of knowledge um and lack of experience was a real
9 hinderance and and contributed to that power imbalance
- 10 INT: A hinderence to?
- 11 P: To um to getting the most out of it to to um that feeling of um being able to
12 ask questions, being comfortable, being able to be myself, all that kind of
13 thing. And having said that I've found that each supervision group is very very
14 different obviously because its different dynamics and different people so the
15 power will come more in some situations then in others um
- 16 INT: Ok
- 17 P: I'm reminded of one supervision group where a power balance came from
18 one of the colleagues, one of the supervisory colleagues who um was making a
19 big fuss of the fact that she had been in supervision for years and I was a
20 novice supervisee and and it got kind of unpleasant really, it sort of made me
21 feel um a bit pathetic
- 22 INT: Aha
- 23 P: Um yeah
- 24 INT: So that feeling of being pathetic and um that power imbalance that was
25 imposed from her
- 26 P: yeah yep not the supervisor um but um and so my my confidence in

27 supervision has changed enormously. I would not say very much and I would
28 just observe a lot whereas now I take part more um in another supervisory
29 group there were a lot of issues, so much so that the supervisor stopped
30 supervision for a while because the issues had of the group had overtaken the
31 supervision and we weren't working in a productive way and that was very
32 interesting

33 INT: Mmm

34 P: And I don't know if that was a facet of how this particular supervisor
35 worked because she's a Kleinian but I don't want to say well all Kleinian
36 supervisors are like that um but um she did have a way of making every new
37 supervisee to the group um fill very very uncomfortable and it wasn't just my
38 experience it was others as well

39 INT: Mmm. Did you feel that it was just your experience at one point?

40 P: At one point but then you know we talked and there were others that felt
41 like that as well so it wasn't mine alone and um she seemed to pick on me
42 particularly when we had this rupture in supervision and said she wanted me
43 to do a verbatim transcript of a one session I'd had that was over a month ago
44 and there was no way I could do a verbatim transcript. Obviously I couldn't
45 even begin to do that

46 INT: Mmm

47 P: Coz I hadn't written it down verbatim. If I'd known before the session that I
48 was to have to produce a verbatim transcript I could have done it um but there
49 was no way that I could do that so I I was set up for failure and I felt quite
50 persecuted

51 INT: Mmm

52 P: Um and in the end the supervisees spoke to the management and said we
53 were unhappy with the emails that we'd received from from her that felt quite

54 persecutory um and we had we had a talk about it in supervision, and she in
55 turn felt quite persecuted because we had gone to the management but we felt
56 we had no option um and the way that the balance of power sorted itself out
57 was by very honest communication and there was a in a real shift after that
58 and we'd all been able to say how we felt and how we experienced each other
59 and I found that a very interesting ah process that happened really and in the
60 end I I I got to quite like her and understand her a bit more and um I've
61 recently gone back to get some things signed by her and she said that she liked
62 and respected me and made a point of saying that so it was interesting to see
63 that shift from ah it was a real learning curve for me.

64 INT: Mmm. Was that important for you that she respected you and recognised
65 you and

66 P: Um yeah yes I think it was yes yeah. I think the lesson in it for me was
67 about dissolving those projections that everyone in the room had um by the
68 honest communication um and that sort of equalised everything and it was
69 just, at that time it was only three of us the supervisor and two two of us
70 supervises because people had left. And it um we were just three human
71 beings in a room trying to sort out issues we had.

72 INT: Aha. Was that different to you said earlier about you were quite quiet
73 initially because of the difference in knowledge, difference in experience

74 P: Yeah

75 INT: And just being three human beings

76 P: Yeah

77 INT: was that somehow a different experience or?

78 P: It was a very different experience because um suddenly it it wasn't this
79 tyrannical supervisor um and us underperforming supervisees and it just
80 became three people who were having difficulties getting along, and getting

81 the work done.

82 INT: You make um you emphasised supervisor and supervisees

83 P: Yeah yeah

84 INT: Do you think those words do they have, are they powerful in some way?

85 P: Um that that depends very much on the supervisor and the supervisor's

86 style because some will be very authoritative and some will be cosy and chatty

87 and um that just totally depends on their style um I had another supervisor

88 who was great fun and you could sit and chat with her and it was a much

89 cosier atmosphere um and I got another supervisor who's bark is much worse

90 than his bite, that's my perception. And he'll kind of I felt with him that he's

91 kind of testing me and if I stood up to him and he could see that I could take it

92 he'd back off and stop doing that um and that was a balance of power too as

93 well. I originally felt quite intimidated in that situation as well um.

94 INT: Mmm. So you said initially that um it's changed over time for you your

95 experience of supervision where you feel more confident now and more able

96 to speak and whats..

97 P: I think that's lots of things. I think by virtue of doing a being on a

98 counselling psychologist of course you're going to change and you're going to

99 grow and I think I've become more confident in my skills as a counsellor

100 although I have times when I think what on earth am I doing but I can see that

101 it seems to work with with um my clients and I say that with a certain amount

102 of awe and astonishment because its its such a mysterious process and um

103 when it does work I think gosh how did that happen um um but I think I've

104 I've changed and grown so much through the training um personally and also

105 I've learnt more skills as I've gone on and on um so I I no longer feel, well

106 I'm no longer the new supervisee green or behind the years or whatever that

107 expression is [laughs] um so yeah its lots of things that have changed that

108 INT: Aha, so a personal development um and a build up of skills

109 P: Yeah

110 INT: Yep. And seeing the skills that you apply actually being affective with

111 clients

112 P: Yes, yeah. And feeling that I can sort of hold my own in in a supervisory in

113 a supervision group as well, which I didn't necessarily think that I could

114 before. And that's that whole thing of feeling new you know that's gone that

115 whole sort of new inexperienced feeling. I mean I'm not, I've still got lots to

116 learn and stuff but yeah.

117 INT: Holding your own what does that mean?

118 P: I think it's almost a conscious decision not to be intimidated and um before

119 it was quite easy for me to feel intimidated and um it's a question of how

120 much am I going to allow that to happen and not allowing it to happen. Um its

121 almost like um there's an interesting thing I read about, if someone sort of is

122 projecting onto you that projection can only kind of hurt you if there's

123 somewhere it can take root in you, that kind of vulnerability, does that make

124 sense?

125 INT: Mmm

126 P: And if there isn't a place for it to land or to take root then you can't receive

127 a projection and that can be a projection of authority, intimidation, power that

128 kind of thing, yeah.

129 INT: Do you also project, into them?

130 P: I'm sure I do but I don't know it [laughs] yeah no I'm sure I do um but it's

131 easy to see other people's but not your own

132 INT: So being able to..

133 P: Actually that's interesting that that thing about do you also project because

134 that's changed as well is that that I think when I first started I was projecting a

135 lot about oh gosh these people are in authority over me and I'm this
136 powerless um ignorant person you know and that that I don't view it like that
137 so much anymore. Um I I don't project this authority onto them in the same
138 way I mean yes they are people I can learn from and they are more experienced
139 then me but this the my projection of the power imbalance has changed as well
140 if that makes sense

141 INT: So it that where sort of that sense of um holding your own

142 P: Yeah I think maybe it is

143 INT: Your own authority or something

144 P: Yeah. I mean I think I've always had slight difficulties with authority in
145 that um when I was at school I was sort of either rebellious or fearful of other
146 people in authority over me um so coming to university at a later stage in life
147 has been quite interesting because I've had to work on that

148 INT: Hmm. Ok so its been over time your experience of supervision has has
149 changed to a more um confident one, one where you hold your own um ah and
150 how has that how's that influenced your development as a counselling
151 psychologist, the fact that that's happened?

152 P: I think I've got to say when I hold my own, that's in one particular
153 supervisory group and that's not to say that if I didn't join another one with a
154 different supervisor that I wouldn't feel different because I think each group is
155 very very unique and and it is all about individual relationships um so um I
156 just wanted to add that. But I can't remember the question now, how's it
157 contributed to my um experience as a trainee counselling psychologist. Um it
158 makes me feel supported, it makes me feel that if I have a problem or with
159 with with a client or I I feel like I'm floundering with a client, I have
160 somewhere to go to discuss it and get some illumination or some support, you
161 know. I had one client who turned quite nasty on me in the end and I found

162 being able to talk about it in the supervision was quite helpful because um
163 you know this does happen to therapists quite a lot you know yeah
164 INT: So sort of normalising experiences or?
165 P: Normalising it, not taking it so personally yeah. Um so I see it as a place
166 for support and for help in seeing things that I can't see and um and I think I
167 try to soak up as much as I can from it, in terms of the theory and um and the
168 experience of the supervisor, you know, I just want to absorb as much as I can.
169 It feels quite precious what he's imparting I mean in one supervision group
170 now.
171 INT: So quite an important
172 P: Yes
173 INT: part of the the profession
174 P: Yeah I would hate to be a therapist without supervision I um and I'm not
175 sure therapists should be without supervision ever really um because it makes
176 me feel I'm working safely if that makes sense. Because there's someone
177 checking my blind spots um and things like that
178 INT: Ok. Um the next question which you've referred to a little bit already but
179 can you tell me about your notions of power in supervision, what that means
180 to you?
181 P: Um I I think it's automatically when you're a trainee, it's automatically a
182 place for the power imbalance and I'm surprised its not talked about more
183 actually and more of how to deal with it. I mean maybe it is somewhere but I
184 haven't come across it. Um but um we're not given advise about how to get
185 the best out of it or how to. I think it does something in the trainee counselling
186 psychologist handbook about about supervision and how to get the best out of
187 it but I think I think power is implicit in it because we are students, we receive
188 reports from our supervisors that go back to the university so essentially we

189 could get into trouble or we could fail um so they have a lot of power over us
190 supervisors. And in fact that incident where I had difficulties with the other
191 supervisor, I was scared at the time that she would go to the university and and
192 cause trouble for me. And I wanted to leave the group and I felt I couldn't
193 because I would have been not completing my part of the contract and I very
194 much felt the power at that point when things were at there worst. And I felt
195 my only recourse was to speak to the management which is what I did. And
196 that was me trying to redress I suppose the balance of power because I went to
197 another authority

198 INT: Mmm, who I suppose had authority over them, her

199 P: Who had authority over her yeah. So that you know there was power all
200 over the place [laughs]

201 INT: Yeah. So that sense of worrying that you would cause trouble in uni what
202 did you mean by that?

203 P: Well um that that she would say that I was a bad supervisee, that I wasn't
204 fulfilling my part as a supervisee, that I was no good as a therapist, that, any
205 number of things you know um I mean it didn't turn out like that in the end
206 & we developed a grudging respect for each other but it took time to get there

207 INT: Mmm. What impact do you think it had in terms of being in supervision?

208 P: What before it turned nasty or after?

209 INT: Um I guess wherever you'd like to

210 P: Before it meant I got nothing out of it, I just sat there hating the supervision
211 process, wanting to get it out of the way, not getting any value out of it,
212 dreading it was a weekly thing and I hated it, didn't want to go there, didn't
213 want to be there, and then after I was able to say how I felt, what I thought,
214 there was this shift in the power dynamic, and I began to enjoy it more and
215 take part more and and I think that's where I got that holding my own

216 confidence coz I kind of knew that if I was ever in that sort of corner again I,
217 there was a way of sort of communicating my way out of it, if that makes
218 sense, I don't know if it does

219 INT: It felt like a corner that you couldn't get out of at some point

220 P: Yeah I felt trapped I wanted to leave. Um I couldn't see a way of it being
221 resolved and yet it was resolved so that was a big learning process

222 INT: That such a thing could be resolved

223 P: Yes, yeah. So um and the other person who was in the group the same time
224 as me also wanted to leave and she's still there now and so its obviously
225 shifted for her as well. And I left for no other reason than I didn't need an
225 extra placement and I'd done my two years there so.

226 INT: So being um learning that you are able to communicate honestly in the
227 situation was um a transformative one

228 P: Yes it was actually yes yeah

229 INT: In terms of whether being able to work together

230 P: And I think think it was I mean often when there are these kind of
231 misunderstandings and difficult dynamics it is all, a lot of it is all these
232 projections isn't it and I think the supervisor felt that we were projecting on
234 her this authoritarian sort of disciplinarian tyrannical kind of supervisor and
235 she just you know and we felt that she was projecting onto us incompetent,
236 useless this that and the other, it all got dissolved.

237 INT. Mmm. So I wonder if that she was a Kleinian, and you use the word
238 projection whether a theory of psychodynamic psychodynamic theory helped
239 you in a way to understand the situation, could you have seen in another way?

240 P: I suppose I could have seen it in another way I just happened to see it that
241 way um um ah could I have seen it another way, I don't really know because
242 it's become part of the way I think now so I I don't know I think before the

243 training I would have said it's a terrible personality clash and it was
244 absolutely no point in trying to shift it and I will just have to leave
245 INT: Mmm
246 P: um I would just put it down to personality clash um yeah
247 INT: Having been through the training, learning about different theories
248 P: Yes yeah I could see that we were all contributing and it wasn't um it
249 wasn't a question of proportioning blame or anything like that. It's a question
250 of each person taking responsibility to be honest and truthful and effective in
251 their communication, yeah
252 INT: Mmm, so so power for you um is something about a person assuming
253 authority
254 P: Or me projecting that authority
255 INT: Yep
256 P: And I suppose at my age I should of, feel I should of got over authority
257 issues um but it as I say being at university has been a learning process for me
258 INT: I guess I maybe ask I was planning to ask you this more towards the end
259 but um I took some information from you about your age, ethnicity that sort of
260 thing and you've mentioned a couple of times is age sort of a part of it would
261 you say in your experience?
262 P: I think age is because I'm probably unusual on a training counselling course
263 in that I'm I'm a little bit older or maybe even a lot older than a lot of people
264 on it, there's some quite young people on the course as well, and um and I
265 suppose um it my age doesn't necessarily mean I'm fully grown up yet and I
266 don't have issues, which I have had to deal with on the training course, do you
267 see what I mean by that?
268 INT: So having to do the course you've come into contact with um not having
269 grown up yet in some ways, some vulnerabilities

270 P: In some ways, some vulnerabilities yeah

271 INT: which seem shouldn't you shouldn't have for your age or?

272 P: Well I think I THINK everyone does have them but whether they deal with

273 them or not is another matter. I think doing this training you have to um I

274 think that a lot of people out there are masquerading as grown ups who are not

275 grown ups, that's my particular theory but yeah [laughs]

276 INT: So in terms of the supervision context in what what part do you think

277 that your age had in terms of how you experienced it. Like you talked earlier

278 about um authority, and I wondered if it was difficult to have someone in

279 authority at your age?

280 P: Um not necessarily because I'm not particularly ageist in the sense that I

281 thought oh to hell with what people think I want to do this and I'll just have to

282 develop quite a thick skin about it and just go after what I want which is the

283 learning but um because I wasn't academically strong at school um I sort of

284 messed it up a bit I didn't have a good academic grounding and I didn't have

285 good experiences with teaches and people in authority, I had to I had to deal

286 with certain issues, and I found myself either being over compliant and sort of

287 overly nice and overly passive and trying, taking too much responsibility or

288 absolutely furious and rebellious and I needed to find a middle ground where I

289 was um GROWN UP you know and and not not scared and intimidated and

290 not angry and rebellious, does that make sense?

291 INT: Yeah I think so, you're talking about in the supervision context and um

292 sort of finding a middle ground in a way and those two reactions of being

293 rebellious or being over compliant were informed by your personal history

294 P: Yes yeah

295 INT: A two way process maybe

296 P: What do you mean by that?

297 INT: You talking about your um your personal history of academic
298 experiences and um with teachers and having two tendencies of compliance or
299 rebelliousness and um it sounds like it was quite a, in the supervision, quite a
300 learning experience for yourself

301 P: I think that extends to more than supervision, I think it extends to the power
302 dynamic in the classroom and ah the power dynamic generally walking around
303 the university and how you relate to staff and other students and the
304 supervisory relationship you have with your research supervisor, I think its
305 across the board this power thing. The power thing that you have with your
306 personal therapist which you have to have as part of the training um I was
307 horrified to learn that they were thinking of having the personal therapist write
308 reports on whether your proficient or not to practice coz that would do terrible
309 things to the power imbalance. So I think I think power is is a big issue when
310 you're a student

311 INT: Mmm and different experiences as a student

312 P: Yeah and you can go even further than that and say there's power in all
313 sorts of places in life generally that we're not really aware of. Its sort of not
314 not explicit but its there

315 INT: As a student is it something about um people have power when they can
316 affect your situation in some way

317 P: Yes yeah, they do and um and and I think I had it in my head oh well I
318 don't get on with authority figures um so for me power was a difficult thing
319 because I had to had to tell myself that I had to learn how to if you see what I
320 mean um and that's part of my history, my particular history um where I'm
321 sure there's lots of people on the course who have always got on well with
322 authority figures who who don't have that issue um and don't see it as a
323 problem

324 INT: So for you um but of the element of power, your experience of it can
325 depend on your personal history your relationship to authority in your life
326 P: Yes, yeah yeah and and also because of experiences at school and
327 everything like that when I came to university there was thing of I don't want
328 to mess it up I don't want to mess it up and then of course that that can cause
329 problems to you know.

330 INT: Mmm. I'm just thinking about where to go from here um. I guess we
331 talked about power in terms of it being something that's not just in
332 supervision but within the whole student context, within life

333 P: But also, within life yeah

334 INT: where something about people having some ah being able to influence
335 the path of what you are trying to do um and within the supervision context
336 you talked about um being quieter not having so much power perhaps through
337 sort of understanding that personal element of it but also something about um
338 um the experience or knowledge you feel you have or you feel others have,
339 that had some bearing on it

340 P: Mmm yes initially it did.

341 INT: And that goes away does it as times gone on?

342 P: It seems to have done yes but um as I say if I was with a new supervisory
343 group with different supervisor I think the dynamics are very unique and I
344 think its how people handle power because some supervisors do really use
345 their power and others don't, if that makes sense. I think we experienced the
346 flip side of that with our clients. I think they project power onto us so which is
347 interesting also

348 INT: Mmm

349 P: They look to us for salvation, guidance, and wisdom um and that's a strange
350 feeling, um yeah.

351 INT: Would you say that you have, have had or have power your own power
352 in supervision?

353 P: Power's a really funny word because you its its quite an ugly word in a way
354 isn't it because it can be so abused so you don't want to think of yourself as
355 having power that you could abuse

356 INT: It has almost negative connotations?

357 P: Yes yeah, but in fact it's a very useful thing because we need to feel
358 powerful but not in an abusive way but we need to feel power in that we need
359 to feel strong and competent um and I I would say I measure it with how
360 comfortable I feel and I when I feel comfortable then I feel strong and
361 confident

362 INT: Mmm. And that um that feeling that doesn't, you've grown in awareness
363 of theory and you've grown in experience but you're aware that if you went to
364 a supervision group um it would be how you feel in that particular context that
365 could affect things?

366 P: I think I think the confidence I've gained wouldn't dessert me

367 INT: Mmm

368 P: but I still might feel cautious because I'd be in a new situation, I'd want to
369 observe how the dynamics worked, I'd want to see I could get on or click with
370 this particular supervisor, the new supervisor. I mean some supervisors try to
371 be scary you know like want to suss out whether a supervisor was trying to be
372 scary or whether it was sort of a more approachable supervisor and that's very
373 much their own personal style. And I think maybe because of my age I'm at an
374 advantage to some students because I think supervisors may be a bit more
375 conscious about the way they speak to me than the way they speak to someone
376 younger, um that's just a theory, I don't know.

377 INT: If we move onto the sort of last main question, which is I wonder in what

378 ways, if any, has being a trainee and a counselling psychologist trainee
379 influenced or been influenced by those supervision experiences?

380 P: I think that's very hard to measure. I think I've learnt an awful lot about
381 how to be with clients from supervision. I've learnt a lot of theory and how to
382 put it into practice, but I mean its impossible to measure that because you get
383 so much learning from a book and classroom situation and it all goes into one
384 big melting pot. I would say its had a huge influence particularly in my client
385 work um but also in terms of my own personal development as well

386 INT: I guess I wondered ah being a trainee I wondered if you thought it might
387 be different if you weren't a trainee, your experiences, supervision and?

388 P: If I was just a counselling psychologist?

389 INT: Mmm

390 P: I don't feel that now so much. In the first year and most of the second year
391 yes um but but not now so much um

392 INT: So whilst you're still training um being a trainee isn't so important or?

393 P: I don't know I mean I think I think once the training's finished you still
394 have another hurdle to overcome which is you're now an ah relatively new
395 counselling psychologist and you've got to earn it and every year you gain
396 more experience and more more skills and whatever and I don't know, there's
397 one supervisor who says it takes about 10 15 years or something before you
398 can call yourself proficient um so um so what am I trying to say. I don't feel
399 the way I felt in the first year, which was totally out of my depth and I really
400 know nothing, don't know what I'm doing. And I feel I'm on the right path
401 and I haven't got there yet but I will do but its going to take time and maybe it
402 wont be till ten years down the line where I can um feel more equal to
403 someone who's been doing this for years and years. I mean even once I've got
404 the qualification I think this is something that is measured by experience

405 INT: Would you say, so its kind of irrespective of whether you are in training
406 or not

407 P: Yeah

408 INT: its sort of a longer view

409 P: Yeah a longer view I think it's the experience that you've got under your
410 belt that counts

411 INT: And would you say that your understanding of what counselling
412 psychology is has had any impact on your supervision?

413 P: Um

414 INT: Like you mentioned that one of your supervisors was Kleinian and I
415 wondered if you

416 P: Yeah I think at [participants university] there's an influence on the
417 relational that I really appreciate and we have had talks um about power I
418 know we have and I've kind of absorbed this ethos and I think it comes from
419 [participants' university] but that as a therapist power is not a good thing, you
420 should strive for equality and two human beings struggling together. And I
421 don't know if that's my own particular take on the learning or that it is
422 something that is stressed there, does that make sense?

423 INT: yeah I guess you've got that, whether it's been deliberately imparted to
424 you or you've understood it that way

425 P: Yes yeah um so um I mean there's this whole thing about the
426 professionalization of therapy, and I think at [participants' university] it's not
427 liked because and I think part of that is the abuse of power that can happen um
428 and I I can see that and I can buy that as a negative thing. So I think that that
429 equality or the I'd strive to do away with that imbalance of power in my work
430 with my clients and and how it affects me also. I don't know if that's clear

431 INT: How it affects you also within when you're with your clients or within

432 supervision or?

433 P: Yes everywhere

434 INT: Yeah Ok.

435 P: So um. Its that sort of the right kind of thing. I'm not sure if I've said

436 enough or, how long has the interview been going for? [laughs]

437 INT: Oh that's fine. So if I summarise a bit of what I've heard in regards to

438 that

439 P: Yeah ok.

440 INT: So in terms of how is being a trainee counselling psychologist influenced

441 your supervision experiences, very much so early on but not so much

442 anymore. I'm simplifying it a bit but does that sort of..

443 P: Yeah. I still see a supervisor as having more more experience more

444 knowledge which I want to learn from but and I don't maybe there is power

445 implicit in that because I'm a student but I don't don't feel intimidated the

446 same way I used to.

447 INT: So I guess we talked about power often it feels like having a negative

448 connotation and part of that negative connotation is when you feel intimidated

449 by a supervisor

450 P: Yeah yes

451 INT: And that intimidation is not there so much for you

452 P: No no it's not.

453 INT: Um I guess having spent some time reflecting on supervision and notions

454 of power, is there anything else you would like to say. Um you know we

455 talked a little bit about the impact of age. I wondered if there was, and I asked

456 you earlier the university you go to or being female, I wondered if they had

457 any if you experienced those as having any impact on on what we've been

458 talking about? They may not but.

459 P: In terms of supervision?

460 INT: Mmm

461 P: I think a supervisor is more prepared to tear strips off someone younger um
462 use their power more. I think I don't know that's just a theory. Having said
463 that, I was older and did experience having strips torn off me so um that's not
464 necessarily true. I think its um I think I think you do have to hold your own
465 and you can only do that if you feel confident. It's a sort of assertiveness in
466 what you will allow and wont allow, how you will let yourself be spoken to I
467 think and that I suppose owning your own personal power.

468 INT: Ok, um thanks very much.